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BIRTHS.

On the 24th January, at Canton, the wife of G. RICHARDS, of a daughter.
On the 27th inst., at No. 131 Wanchai Road, the wife of Mr. H. DIXON, of a daughter.

DEATH.

On the 16th January, at Kobe, ELLEN, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. M. ARAB, aged 7 years.

Hongkong Weekly Press

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ARRIVAL OF MAILS.

The French Mail of the 25th ult., arrived per s.s. Yarra on the 27th inst.; and the English Mail of the 1st inst., is expected to arrive per s.s. Chusan on or about the 31st inst.

EPITOME OF THE WEEK.

The Government of Corea has declared neutrality in the event of war between Russia and Japan. The British Minister approves, but Russia is reported to object.

About midnight on the 20th inst. the unfinished building of the Russo-Chinese Bank at Tientsin was completely destroyed by fire. Its insurance amounted to 80,000 taels, but the damage is reckoned at 200,000 taels.

News from Vladivostok at the middle of the month says that the ice was then a foot thick in the harbour, and that it had been found necessary to beach the torpedo-boats. The degree of frost this year is exceptional throughout the whole of the Far East.

Various reports are arriving at Darjeeling, stating that the Tibetans are becoming truculent, and that the Lamas declare they will appeal to Russia if the British advance continues. It is believed in several quarters that fighting is likely to take place in the early future.

Our Manila correspondent telegraphed on the 27th inst.: "The *Zafiro*, which sailed for Cebu, with marines, on December 29th, has not yet returned here. The naval authorities here deny all knowledge of her sinking." The *Zafiro* is the U.S. inter-island transport of that name.

Reuter's agency at Peking wires that China has invited the support of the powers to attempt to mediate between Russia and Japan. France is willing to use her good offices to endeavour to arrange a *modus vivendi* with the assistance of England and America. In reply to Prince Ching's communication, the British and American Ministers, acting in agreement, have explained the difficulties of mediating at the present juncture. Prince Ching is evidently still playing Russia's game.

The Russian s.s. *Kazan*, from Odessa, cleared at Hongkong Harbour Office on the 28th inst. She has some 2,000 tons of general cargo, and 1,830 recruits for Port Arthur. The Russian s.s. *Malaya* arrived from Port Arthur the same day in ballast. Shortly after her arrival she cleared for Odessa. Messrs. Melchers & Co are agents for both vessels. The Nippon Yusen Kaisha s.s. *Tamba-maru*, the vessel on the Japan-Europe line that was recalled from Singapore and had to hand over her cargo and passengers to the French Mail, arrived from Singapore on the 28th on her way to Japan. On the voyage up she was in company with the Nippon Yusen Kaisha s.s. *Hitachi-maru*, from Antwerp, with a heavy cargo for Japan, including a large quantity of explosives.

The *Japan Mail* writes on the 16th inst.:—The leading Japanese journals are all agreed that strange as an attitude of neutrality on China's part may appear at this juncture, it is the only course permitted by her condition. Japan asks nothing else. Among these journals the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* notes that all the Powers have now virtually declared their intention to preserve strict neutrality, and that the inconvenience thus caused to Russia will be very great. Japan can obtain all the supplies she needs without any difficulty. She has them at home within easy reach of the scene of operations. But Russia will have to carry everything an immense distance. Fuel and food alike will be unprocureable for her wants. Our Tokyo contemporary thinks that it is here she will first feel the pinch. Indeed it regards the situation as most dispiriting for Russia from that point of view.

The *N.-C. Daily News* reports that during two days last week at Shanghai a large number of anonymous circulars enclosed in envelopes were distributed through the local post, addressed to native contractors, grocers, and purveyors, calling upon them to prove their patriotism by refusing to supply Russian men-of-war with coal and food supplies.

It appears that the Japanese in the Liaotung Peninsula, finding themselves very insecure owing to the Russians having little regard for their persons and property, and the Chinese being not indisposed to follow suit, addressed a petition from Port Arthur to Viceroy Alexieff. On receipt of this petition the Viceroy summoned the representative of the petitioners and the Chief of Police to his presence, and gave to the latter explicit instructions that every possible precaution should be taken for the security of Japanese life and property.

The name of the new Governor of the Straits Settlements was announced on the 23rd inst. He is Sir John Anderson, one of the Principal Clerks of the Colonial Office. Sir John Anderson, K.C.M.G., was born at Gartly, Aberdeenshire, in 1858, and was educated at Aberdeen University, where he took 1st class honours in Mathematics and gained the gold medal as most distinguished graduate of his year. He entered the Colonial Office as a 2nd class clerk in 1879. Since then his career has been:—Bacon scholar, Gray's Inn, 1887; Inns of Court studentship, 1888; joint commissioner, with the late Sir J. F. Dickson, 1891, to enquire into certain matters connected with the Supreme Court of Gibraltar; priv. sec. to Sir R. Meade, 17th Aug. 1892; attached to staff for the Behring Sea Arbitration in London and Paris, 1892-93; 1st class clerk, C. O., 1896; principal clerk 1897; sec. to the conference between Mr. Chamberlain and the Colonial Premiers, June and July, 1897; C.M.G., 1898; C. O. representative on staff of the Duke of Cornwall and York during visit to the Colonies, 1901; K.C.M.G. 1901.

"It is stated, on high diplomatic authority, that an important advance has been made towards a pacific settlement, and that the peace party has gained the ascendancy in Russia, in consequence of the emphatic representations of certain influential Ministers regarding Russia's unpreparedness for war. Russia, therefore, replies to Japan in a wholly conciliatory spirit, stating that she is prepared to recognise the autonomy and integrity of Corea and to address a Note to the Powers recognising Chinese sovereignty and the integrity of Manchuria. Japan, however, desires a formal embodiment of the latter principle in a special arrangement between Russia and Japan." So ran Reuter's telegram of the 21st inst. News has varied during the past week, but Reuter's last telegram puts a different appearance on affairs. It is as follows:— "London, 27th January. Advice from Tokyo, 27th instant, state that the Government has intimated to the Russian Minister that an early response is desired to the last Note. It seems likely that Japan will act decisively in a few days, though many have hitherto objected to Japan taking the initiative, the majority would now welcome an ultimatum or, if necessary, a declaration of war." Indications here are all for war.

THE TIBETAN QUESTION.

(Daily Press, 28th January.)

We have to sincerely thank the Russian Press, which in this instance we may assume as the equivalent of the Russian Government, for the information it has given us as to the importance attaching in its eyes to Tibet. For more than a hundred years we have been content to be next-door neighbours to this most unfriendly of nations, and have never thought it worth our while to take any official notice of its peculiar ideas of shutting itself off from communication with the rest of the world. The situation was in fact very much like that of DANIEL and the lions—DANIEL did not care a stiver for the lions, and the lions did not care a stiver for DANIEL. In all this we have committed a grave mistake; Tibet is really the key to our communications with China, and affords the only practical route for a line of railway connecting India and the Flowery Land. What is Russia's interest in Tibet, and why she should give us this, doubtless disinterested, information, is, however, not so apparent. Russia's point of nearest approach to Tibet is the highest crest of the mountains over the Chitral valley, where the distance as the crow flies is some four hundred miles, and that over the highest mountain range in the world: the route is, moreover, in Afghan and in British hands, and, it may be added, has never been traversed by mortal man. On the north Russian territory is divided from Tibet by some six hundred miles of mountain and desert, which are, moreover, in possession of China. The intermediate countries are, besides, amongst the most impracticable on the face of the earth; and this not so much on account of the unfriendly character of the populations as from physical causes of climate and configuration. Recent travellers, both English and Russian, have experienced these difficulties of the road, and have found many thousands of square miles of the intervening country absolutely without inhabitants, owing to its enormous elevation, from 11,000 to 14,000 feet, preventing the growth of the ordinary food-crops, as well as rendering travelling both difficult and dangerous. Russia's great traveller, PREJEVALSKY, in crossing these wastes on more than one occasion had to retire before the difficulty of the roads, and it would be absurd to suppose that what a well-equipped voyager, with every appliance for overcoming difficulties, was unable to accomplish, could in the ordinary course of traffic become a high road for intercourse. Russia, in point of fact, has no legitimate interest whatever in Tibet, and in her querulous protest that a British occupation would stand in the way of her communications with China, she somewhat naively lets the cat out of the bag, and shows how the interest she has been lately taking in these remote districts is really actuated by considerations purely aggressive.

Very much the same may be said of her ill-humour over the recent visit of Lord CURZON to the Persian Gulf. It is not customary in the intercourse of civilised nations to exhibit ill-will over actions legitimate in themselves, and strictly in accordance with international practice undertaken by another Power. We have not considered ourselves called on to interfere in Russia's breaches of solemn engagements, as, for instance, in her recent actions in Finland. It would be easy to prove that our own interests in Finland are really very extensive—far more so than those of Russia in either Persia or Tibet. The courtesy of

nations has never permitted interference with the private affairs of one's neighbours. Much has been said and written as to the general astuteness of Russian diplomacy. If by this we mean the ability to gain her ends without having recourse to warlike measures we may accept the phrase as a truism; it is otherwise if we come to analyse her methods, of recent years at all events. The art of diplomacy is generally accepted as implying the ability to conceal the weak points of a policy and to succeed in representing the worse as the better cause; in this Russia has in her recent diplomacy most egregiously failed, and her successes have been due to her proficiency in the art of bullying the weaker. Against a weak and corrupt Power as China, it is true, this policy has been eminently successful, but it is at best a dangerous game for the user. Tried with a Power possessing self-respect and able to see the whole of the game, it exposes her to having her own flank turned at any moment, and all the more so when she is unable to show that she has come into the contest with clean hands. In this respect she stands a bad chance when pitted against such a Power as Japan, not to say Britain. Japan has sufficient astuteness and knowledge of the game to be able to comprehend that Russia, as she stands to-day, whatever power she may have of annoyance, is incapable of striking, and by her senseless threats only brings contempt on herself. This has been accentuated in her recent correspondence, and her weakness has been amply shown in her last contest of wits. She condescendingly offered Japan certain concessions in Corea, forgetting apparently that Corea was not hers to dispose of. Japan saw the weak spot at once, and was not slow to take advantage of it. The dispute was not about Corea at all, she replied—it was about Russian encroachment in Manchuria; what she required was that Russia should give effect to her reiterated engagement with respect to its evacuation. That was the purport of her Note. After this she took the opportunity of suggesting that Russia should be quick about it. Russia had been assiduously seeking to force Japan into taking the first step towards a breach of the peace; she found the tables most effectively turned against herself. A similar blunder has been made with regard to Britain, and it is to be hoped it will be met in an equally effective manner. To go back a little, we spoke above of Russia's showing of her hand with regard to Tibet. It is interesting to mark the excuse given on behalf of Russia for meddling in the affairs of that country; there happens to exist in a remote corner of Mongolia a Lamaist monastery which possesses a real live BUDDHA in touch with him of Lhasa. England of course has many religious communities in her midst holding obedience to the Pope, but no Englishman in his wildest moments ever thought that this entitled him to interfere between the King of Italy and the Pope. Well, it seems that at the instigation of some Russian agent the BUDDHA of Khamba has been preaching to him of Lhasa, and offering him the friendship of Russia if he will only turn out the objectionable English. Such is the amount of interest in Tibet possessed by Russia. Acting on this, the Dalai Lama was instigated to send a mission to Russia—according to the usual Russian formula “for commercial purposes only.” Having so got in the edge of the wedge, Russia at once begins the modern game. Britain, finding out what was going on, reminded the Dalai Lama of his former promises about demarking the frontier.—He of Lhasa, thinking he had now got a powerful friend

at court, at whose mere growl the Englishman would at once drop on his knees and retire gracefully, refused to give any reply, and when pressed, like the little vulgar boy, put his fingers to his nose. Russia, who had already committed herself with the Khamba Lama, was thus placed in an awkward position familiar enough to beginners at the great game of poker. She found herself with no alternative but either to show up her cards or carry on the bluff. Unfortunately for her own reputation she chose the latter. What promises she has made to the Dalai Lama does not as yet appear, but unfortunately for the game the British Government has for once taken heart of grace, and has continued its advance. Now comes in the most interesting part of the whole; stung by the conspicuous want of success of her former moves, Russia, with a rare belief in her own prowess, instead of retreating, has apparently determined to persevere, and accordingly has been trying on the worn out game of bully. All that would be necessary would, she tells us, through the *Novoe Vremya*, be to exercise a “little pressure upon certain points” and create a slight diversion in some directions that would be disagreeable to British politicians! Unfortunately for her own game she has been rather premature. Relying on the presumed geographical ignorance of her former confiding friend, France, she has told her that the presence of England in Tibet is only to complete her communications with the Yangtze Valley by opening a line of railway through the coveted possession. Times have unfortunately changed, and her French allies, who know pretty well all the available ways of entrance to western China are not likely to be startled by a project, even on the authority of Russia, or become believers in the feasibility of a railway at an average elevation of 12,000 feet, and crossing passes still higher, which are, moreover, blocked by snow for nine months in the year. In fact, the extraordinary means that Russia is driven to to maintain her former position in Central Asia are an unwitting confession how weak is her present hold, and how that conscience that makes cowards of us all tells her that a day of restitution is at hand when she will have to disgorge in turn her ill-gotten plunder. Such, she feels, will be the effect if her first check, and it is the thought of this that is forcing her to forget her ordinary prudence.

THE KWANGSI TROUBLES.

(Daily Press, 26th January.)

There is a certain amount of news which goes to Shanghai about affairs in South China which never reaches Hongkong. That it is news in the best sense of the word is improbable. A point to be noticed about it is that it is invariably hostile to the Chinese Government, and hence we may infer that it is dispatched to the Shanghai native papers (about whose sentiments toward the central authorities at Peking there is no doubt) by those who are classed together as “Reformers.” Now with the real Reform party in China we have every sympathy and trust one day to see them triumph in their crusade against the abuses of government in their native country. But it must be recognised that under the sheltering name of Reformer there are in China, especially in the South, many disreputable elements, who by their claim to the name only bring discredit upon the sincerer members of the party. Judging by the quality of the mass of information which reaches Shanghai from Canton with regard

to disturbances in the Kwang provinces, much of it must be supplied by the less reputable "Reformers." At any rate it is very singular that even in Hongkong, a hot-bed of Reformers, one does not hear so many startling stories of Imperial reverses and notable rebel successes. It is true that within the past fortnight there have been rumours in this Colony of threatening symptoms on the neighbouring mainland of China, and even of another projected China New Year attempt. But of a new outbreak in acute form of the Kwangsi revolt and its spreading to the very Canton neighbourhood we have no trustworthy intimation. Our Canton correspondent in his letter of the 21st instant mentioned the growing persistence of stories of an Imperial defeat; but it is hardly credible that nothing more than tea-house rumours should have got to Canton by now, had any serious mishap occurred to the Government forces. Viceroy SHUM continues in Canton, practically on the sick-list, and rumours about his returning to Kwangsi are quite vague, which could hardly be the case if the more alarming reports were true. It is not, however, without interest to see what Shanghai believes about the Southern troubles. In one of the latest issues of the *North-China Daily News* we find in the column of "Notes on Native Affairs," and under the heading of "The Crisis in Kwangsi," a long Canton despatch quoted, recounting a general recrudescence of restlessness among the malcontents of both Kwang provinces, due to the recent arrival of considerable quantities of arms and ammunition as well as of money from Chinese resident abroad. In the part of Kwangsi bordering on Hunan, moreover, it is reported, considerable bodies of rebels are alarming the Hunanese officials, who are hastily raising new levies to resist any incursion. A picturesque part of the tale reports two women leaders, wives of dead rebel chiefs, at the heads of 400 or 500 men each, sworn to avenge their husbands' deaths. One of these is known as "Queen Wu," and she is accompanied by her twenty-two and eighteen-year old daughters, in male attire and astride their horses. The people of the districts frequented by these warlike ladies are reported panic-stricken and fleeing to safer regions. It is curious how these titles of Amazons recur in Kwangsi. We distinctly remember similar stories years ago—a fact which does not, of course, disprove them, but perhaps renders them harder to credit in full. According to the same despatch quoted in our Shanghai contemporary, Viceroy SHUM is soon about to leave Canton for Kwangsi, accompanied by a force of 15,000 well-armed troops, which are expected to crush the rebellion. This also is an old tale. Every detachment of regulars which started from Canton has been off to crush the rebellion. We have heard of great quantities of men borrowed from other provinces to crush the same rebellion. We know little about the rebellion and still less what all these troops are doing now. Indeed a cloud of mystery, at present impenetrable, hangs over Kwangsi, as it has hung for many years. It seems even to envelop Canton and H.E. Viceroy SHUM as well. The latter produced the impression on the Europeans who met him of being a very strong man, and he had too such a reputation among the Chinese. At first his advent in Canton seemed to promise the beginning of better days, and his appearance in the field in Kwangsi was marked by an immediate dwindling of alarmist rumours as well as, by all accounts alike, a collapse on the part of the rebels. He returned to Canton, however, fell ill, and since then all sorts of stories have

been rife about the spreading of revolt and the troubles threatening even Canton. What is the explanation of it all? We cannot say.

RUSSIA AS A CIVILISING POWER

(Daily Press, 27th January.)

The phrase "Russia's civilising mission" is one which we have heard very often of late years, particularly during Russia's push forward across the Amur River into Manchuria and down to the sea and the western frontier of Corea. It is a phrase which has been on the lips of many Russian officials and in the writings of countless Russian journalists. It has been felt that it is a phrase which splendidly justifies Russia's constant encroachments on the territories of her Asiatic neighbours. Here is the opportunity for them to put before the eyes of Europe and of America a picture of a great, white nation bringing to the less fortunately coloured peoples of the Asiatic continent the priceless benefits of Western civilisation, with its railways, telegraphs, schools, churches (though with Russia proselytisation is not a great weapon), police, and trade. Must not such a spectacle compel the admiration of the Western world, rejoicing to see heathen and imperfectly, because Oriental, civilised peoples brought into forcible contact with the fruits of Occidental culture? It seems to us that Russia was almost justified in expecting her near-sighted neighbours in the West to applaud her noble crusading spirit. Unfortunately, somehow or other, there has not been an universal chorus of approval in Europe, and people have been found to hold that the Asiatic nations themselves have a right to say something about their own future. It has been hinted, too, that Russia is not the best exponent of Western civilisation, even among Asiatics; and further, that there is a good deal of civilisation wanted in Russia before she can without presumption pose as the missionary of the West to the East. We can imagine that considerable pain must have been caused to the officials and journalists above mentioned at hearing their country's cherished pretensions questioned—that is to say, if they are sincere in upholding these pretensions. But it is worth while to reflect whether all Russians, or indeed whether any Russian who is at once honest and highly educated, can look on Russia as a country fitted as yet to stand forward as a civilising Power.

A great number of books have been published recently in English, either original or translated, dealing with Russia's administration of her Asiatic possessions, particularly Siberia. Their authors have been English, American, or Russian, for the most part. We may leave on one side the non-Russian writers (though one of these, Miss ANNETTE MEAKIN, in her book about Russian Turkestan is distinctly favourable to the Russian rulers in that part of Asia), and look rather to the Russians who have dealt with the subject. We quoted some time ago in these columns from a work on the government of Sakhalin, the remote island which Russia uses as a penal settlement for her worst criminals. The author, whose name escapes us, though we have a vivid recollection of his book, drew a terrible picture of brutality, alike of prisoners and of those who looked after them, of general official corruption, and in short of a state of affairs compared with which the civilisation of any tribe of head-hunters would shine. This account has been borne out exactly by

a book just written by an Englishman, Mr. CHARLES H. HAWES, the first of his race to penetrate into the interior of Sakhalin. But it may be argued that as Sakhalin is reserved for Russia's worst criminals, it is unfair to dwell too much upon its savage government. We will turn therefore to a book called *Sixteen Years in Siberia*, by Mr. LEO DEUTSCH, a translation of which has been issued by Mr. JOHN MURRAY. This is the sober record of the Siberian experiences of a Russian revolutionist. Mr. DEUTSCH was originally, it is true, arrested and imprisoned in Kiev for participation in an attempt on the life of a traitor in a revolutionary group. He escaped from prison in 1878 and left Russia for Switzerland, where he gave up his sympathy with Terrorist ideas and became a Social Democrat, a rather rare thing in Russia then. Unfortunately in 1884 he was caught in Baden, and, the German Government being anxious to oblige Russia, was handed over to the authority of his own countrymen. After brief imprisonment at the fortress of Peter and Paul and the House of Detention at St. Petersburg, and after trial at Odessa, was sentenced to thirteen years' and four months' penal servitude and started for Siberia. The bulk of the book is taken up with a description of those weary years in Siberia, told with a remarkable restraint of language and absence of exaggeration. It is of course impossible for us here to give any idea of the work, but it may be said that the impression produced is one of disgust at that so-called civilisation, of which this prison-system is part. Ignorance seems to be the distinguishing mark of the whole official régime in Siberia, mingled in the majority of cases with barbarity of a particularly stupid kind. The political prisoners, it must be remembered, are nearly all persons of considerable education, to whom the degradation of their lot in Siberia must be most bitter. The number of suicides recorded by Mr. DEUTSCH bears witness that this is the case. In some instances this was due to the treatment of "politicals" in exactly the same way as their criminal fellow-exiles, by flogging, etc. The most striking story is that of a young lady who died after a flogging—administered for an "assault" on the commandant—whereupon three of her female companions took poison and died, followed by two of the men in prison with Mr. DEUTSCH, who killed themselves as a protest against the treatment of the women. However, as we have said, we cannot give a just idea of the book, which effectually disposes of Russia's claim to civilise others. We quoted recently from a home paper Mr. DEUTSCH's account of the Blagovestchensk massacre. He was in the town at the time and gives in his book a photograph of the scene of the atrocity. Apologists for the massacres, he tells us, were found even among people of culture! Yet, for all the evil he is bound to speak of her, Mr. DEUTSCH does not despair of his country. "The Tsar and his Ministers," he says, "endeavour by the most cruel and severe measures to quench the torch that has been kindled in the land; the greater part of Russia has been placed under martial law; the prisons can hardly contain the numbers of their captives; those who protest against such a régime are sent to Siberia by the trainload. But nothing can stem the tide of the movement; it will rise higher, embracing ever wider circles of the people, and the hour is not far off when autocracy will be laid low, as it was in Western Europe so many generations ago." It may, it must be so. But meanwhile, until such is the case, Russia cannot be ranked as a civilised and civilising nation.

FRANCE AND SIAM.

(Daily Press 29th January.)

The telegrams, dated the 9th January, and sent through REUTER'S agency to India, but not transmitted to China or the Straits, announced, one that "the new treaty between France and Siam will assign the whole of Luang Prabang to the French sphere," and the other that, according to the *Standard's* Paris correspondent, "after the ratification of the new Franco-Siamese treaty, on the 15th February, Siam hands to France the territory conceded to it and appoints delegates to meet for the delimitation of the frontier between Cambodia and Siam, while France evacuates Chantaboon." It appears from this that, as indeed had been foreshadowed, the new treaty is a re-enactment with slight modifications of the treaty concluded between France and Siam toward the end of 1902 but never ratified. By the former treaty Siam ceded to France the provinces of Bassak and Meluprey, on the western bank of the Mekong, together with a small piece of territory in the province of Angkor on the shores of the Great Lake. Siam was also to bind herself to seek French assistance preferentially in constructing ports, canals, or railways in the Mekong basin. In return France was to evacuate Chantaboon, which she has held since 1893, and to permit Siam to keep native troops, officered by natives, on her bank of the Mekong, which by the establishment of the neutral zone by the 1893 agreement she was not allowed to do. This treaty of 1902 was one-sided enough, seeing that the evacuation of Chantaboon had been delayed by France on the flimsiest pretext and that the neutral zone had proved a curse alike to France and Siam by providing an asylum for desperate characters where no troops could follow them. Nevertheless the French Colonials did not consider the convention advantageous enough to their country, and therefore engineered that it should not be ratified. The hand of M. DOUMER, the well known ex-Governor of French Indo-China, was plainly evident herein. Bullying Siam had been one of his favourite pursuits, and he returned to France determined to carry on the sport to the utmost in conjunction with the "forward" party there. M. BRAU, his successor in Indo-China, however, has not lent himself well to the schemes of the expansionists, and it was not until the end of last year that Franco-Siamese relations again reached an acute stage. The 1902 treaty then lapsed, unratified, and telegrams at once began to tell of hostile preparations on the Siamese frontier, while the Colonial party's journals became more violently anti-Siamese. Happily the French Government is not the truculent aggressor that the Colonial party would wish it to be, and now it seems that the treaty has been patched up. France gets extra privileges, though their nature is not clear from the telegrams quoted above. The Luang Prabang mentioned is apparently the name of the whole district, for the town of that name on the east bank of the Mekong is already French, like all the territory on that bank. One might be tempted to think that Luang Prabang is a misreading for Battambang (sometimes called Patabang), the adjoining province to Angkor, for the greater part of Battambang is in the French sphere of influence as defined in the Anglo-French Declaration of 1896. However, it is obvious that an understanding with Britain must precede any extension of the French sphere, especially in the south, where an advance of boundaries means a nearer approach to Bangkok itself. It is not, of course,

unlikely that such an understanding may exist; in fact, a rumour somewhat to that effect was announced by our London correspondent some months ago. The French Government made no protest with regard to recent events in Kelantan and Tringganu last year, though the Press of course did not pass the matter over in silence. Then, however, there was no infringement of Siamese sovereign rights by Britain; indeed, in the case of Kelantan, Siam's suzerainty was put on a more definite footing than ever before. We notice in a more recent number of the *Pall Mall Gazette* an article on Great Britain in the Malay Peninsula, in which it is stated that "to the far-sighted there is but one forecast to be made as regards our policy in the Peninsula—it must become 'all red'." The writer continues:—"We must avoid giving our Gallic neighbour a pretext for further activity, while safeguarding and strengthening our own position, but, nevertheless, annexation, or rather federation of the Siamese Protected States with the Federated Malay States, 'must come.'" With or without pretext, France is now wresting from Siam two provinces and part of a third, and the eating-away of Siam on the eastern frontier continues briskly. We see that the *Times of Ceylon*, commenting on the telegrams of the 9th instant, remarks:—"A study of the map of Siam now and before JULES FERRY aroused ideas of a Colonial France is significant. Absorption on the same lines twenty-five years hence would mean the extinction of Siam and coterminous French and Indian boundaries." This is true, and the prospect is not one desirable for either Britain or France. But the ambitions of Indo-China and of Singapore are great, and Siam is inherently weak. It is difficult to see how the constant shrinkage of Siam's frontiers can stop while Colonial expansionists continue to have weight in the councils of France and Britain.

HONGKONG'S COMMUNICATIONS ON THE MAINLAND.

(Daily Press, 23rd January.)

One of the great drawbacks to life in Hongkong in the opinion of hosts of its residents is the sense of confinement to a limited area. The island is small, and there is a feeling of being glued, like the limpet, to a rock. True it is that the rock is eminently beautiful, and strangers arriving here are greatly struck with its charm, and at first are apt to imagine that its beauties can never pall. Nor do they indeed to the real lover of nature. The panorama of sea and islands, the glories of rock and foliage, of green or purple mountain-side, with the gorgeous sunsets so frequent, appeal gratefully to the eye, and afford it a constant feast. But however lovely may be one's surroundings, a desire for change is inherent in the human breast, and after a time it not infrequently amounts to a craving. Hence it is that residents in small islands soon sigh for the larger scope of the mainland, or of some more extended area. Hongkong is no exception to the rule. Much as its residents admire its varied beauties, they sigh for greater facilities for getting out of it on short trips. On the acquisition of the New Territory, it was hoped that the country thus placed within reach of the Colony would soon be opened up to the residents. To some extent this expectation was realised. A main road was constructed communicating with Taipo, and quicker means of reaching some of the inland districts were secured; but no movement has been made as yet towards rendering the

Territory a holiday resort. The nature of the country is unfortunately of such a character that the opening up of roads is a tedious and costly work, the mountain chain bordering the coast being difficult to pierce, and the outlay required to establish an efficient system of communication out of all proportion to the revenues derivable from it.

It was hoped, when the New Territory was acquired, that before long a railway would pass through it en route for Canton, as a concession had been granted by the Peking Government for the construction of a line from Canton to Kowloon, and such a highway could not fail to assist greatly to develop the resources of the new dependency, while it would also afford agreeable opportunities to the colonists of becoming better acquainted with its configuration. But the railway is still a dream of the future, and seems likely to remain so unless the Imperial Government can be induced to authorise the Colonial Government to assist enterprise in this direction either with a subsidy or by land grants. It might, of course, be argued that such a proceeding would prove financially unsound, as a railway, say to Shamshun from Kowloon, would be almost like a road leading from nowhere to nowhere, so far as traffic is concerned; but if ever a tunnel is driven through the mountain range behind the Kowloon peninsula, it is absolutely certain that it would not be long confined to the borders of British territory. If the British-Chinese Corporation were still afraid to embark capital in such a venture, other and more enterprising capitalists would soon come forward to carry on the railway to further points. If they could not take the line to Canton on account of the concession already granted, what, for instance, need prevent them continuing it to Waichow? No doubt permission to make the line could be won from Peking. It is of the utmost importance to the trade of the Colony, as well as being most desirable to provide it with an outlet, that full advantage should be taken of the opportunity which the possession of the hinterland of Kowloon gives to us. So far we are pretty well in the position of the man in Scripture who buried his talent. We have been favoured with a great chance for the development of this Colony, and we have done practically nothing with it. The New Territory has neither been made a stepping-stone to secure the trade of central Kwangtung, a source of supply for the provision markets of Hongkong, nor yet even a play-ground and health-resort for the citizens of Victoria. It is time that all this was altered, even at a considerable cost, and we trust the representations that have recently been made to the British authorities on the subject of the projected Kowloon-Canton Railway will not prove wholly fruitless.

REGISTRATION OF SERVANTS IN HONGKONG.

(Daily Press, 25th January.)

The petition presented the other day by the Hon. H. E. POLLOCK, K.C., from the ladies of Hongkong, praying to the Officer Administering the Government for the compulsory registration of servants should, it seems, have been addressed to His Excellency and the members of Council. That technical mistake can be readily amended, but it is to be regretted, inasmuch as it may serve to delay consideration of a subject of the utmost importance to the British and foreign community. The evils attending the present system, or rather want of system,

for the hiring and regulation of domestic servants are so patent and are so clearly set forth in the petition that it is almost unnecessary to refer to them, much less to dwell upon the inconveniences, the wrongs, and the annoyances which nearly every household has to endure at the hands of incompetent, careless, insolent, or dishonest servants. It will be remembered that the late Governor, Sir HENRY BLAKE, to whose notice the difficulty of obtaining reliable private chair and jinricksha-coolies had been forcibly brought home, appointed a Commission (comprised of Messrs. T. SERCOMBE SMITH, F. J. BADELEY, and R. C. WILCOX) to enquire into and take evidence on the subject. That Commission reported very strongly in favour of the registration of all coolies, with photographs to be attached to the registration-certificates, and attached a draft Ordinance to their recommendations for the purpose of carrying them into effect. Unfortunately His Excellency Sir HENRY BLAKE, while admitting the evils of the existing want of system, was not in favour of registration, being doubtful whether the coolies would be willing to comply with its conditions. It is quite likely that the coolies would not have been favourably disposed to registration; ignorant persons are seldom willing to concur in regulations which may give them a little trouble, even if they are likely to prove to their ultimate advantage. But the good of the community should also be set above the inclinations or wishes of a class. The British and foreign community pay for the music and it is their right to call the tune. It may be said, of course, that the servants will strike against registration, but this is not likely when they find that it will cost them nothing and that it will give them a status which at present they do not possess. Under the existing want of system there is nothing to prevent a rogue or criminal from obtaining—either by theft or purchase—the testimonials of a servant who has given up that employment or died at his home in the interior, and entering the household of a British resident with the ulterior object of robbing it, and thus bringing discredit on the servant class. That such things are done we have every reason to believe, and they doubtless account for many of the frequent robberies by domestics or persons in collusion with them. It could not fail to be a source of satisfaction to the servants of the Colony to know that they possessed in their registered certificate a guarantee for their steadiness and good character. We believe it is urged in some quarters that, seeing there is even now a scarcity of servants of any kind, registration would accentuate that difficulty, and lead to a demand for higher wages. Even now, it is argued, it is not easy to secure native servants who can speak English, or that jargon called "pidgin English," and that this must become more marked if the bad and untrustworthy boys or coolies are weeded from the ranks. In any change proposed, no matter what, some risk must be taken, and it is possible that wages for really efficient and obliging servants would advance in a degree, but we feel sure that the vast majority of employers would gladly pay a little more than they have been giving to get hold of willing and decently behaved domestics. As for the supply, that would soon be brought up to demand. Even under former and haphazard conditions, there has never been any serious difficulty in procuring labour. On the other side, there have been several cases of residents giving up housekeeping altogether, owing to the badness of servants, and going to the hotels to live. Rather than put up with the never-ceasing trouble

of changing incompetent servants they have been content to incur a heavier outlay and put up with the limitations of hotel life. The Cantonese, under the best circumstances, make indifferent servants, but uncontrolled and unregulated they become utterly careless of the interests of their employers and render eye service of the most barefaced type. It is high time that something was done to place this important question on a new footing, so that the conditions of existence—always trying in the Orient—should be rendered more bearable to female heads of European households.

HONGKONG JOTTINGS.

(Daily Press, 25th January.)

Another week of alternating war and peace rumours has passed over Hongkong, without succeeding in convulsing it. As regards the actual state of affairs in the North, we are as wise as we were, and even a fresh crop of stories about telegrams received by bank managers on Saturday did not bear fruit in the production of authentic news. As neither Japan nor Russia wants us (I do not refer to Hongkong particularly by "us") to know too much about what is going on, this is not surprising, annoying as it may be to us. Those who try to derive information from the movements of the dollar have seen it sink steadily from 1/10½ on Monday to 1/9½ on Saturday, and hence have been predicting peace; but, after all, there are other circumstances which affect the price of the dollar beside war rumours. In the absence of certain intelligence, however, one is compelled to try to extract some from all available sources to keep up the excitement. Now, if we were fond of "bunders," we should have a grand opportunity.

The beggars of Hongkong appear to be multiplying. On several days last week I counted five of these nuisances in Wyndham Street alone, between Powell's and Glenealy Buildings. One was a miserable old hag who had lost an arm, and was careful to thrust the maimed stump under the noses of passers-by. I did not observe their sympathy taking any practical form, however, as repulsive sights are scarcely an incentive to it. Another of these creatures was a decrepit old man who demanded *cumsha* for *chow-chow* from everybody in sight, and, on not receiving the *cumsha* as mostly happened, stood and used what was evidently abusive languages if an angry exhortation and a snarl can indicate it. A third group was a small and very dirty girl leading a smaller and dirtier blind (apparently) boy. This imp followed and pestered me to the foot of the Magistracy Hill, and only desisted then on my calling the attention of a Sikh constable to the nuisance. Is there no room for these pestilential vagrants in the House of Detention? If so, why are they not there? If not, why not?

Hongkong keeps its luxuries near its business centre. If one wishes to discover the worst-lighted and the worst-smelling streets in the city, one has not far to go. The part of Chater Road between Queen's and Prince's Buildings is certainly the worst-lighted—it is difficult for a stranger at night even to make out that there are trees in the middle of it unless he runs against them—and the strip of road between Prince's Buildings and the new Watson premises is as certainly the worst-smelling. The latter nuisance will no doubt be remedied when Messrs. Watson's block is completed. At present it is disgraceful at times.

It behoves Hongkong people who visit the Fatsan railway to remember the fact that the departure of trains is governed by time which is 15 minutes ahead of our Clock Tower. A party who went up recently found this out by sad experience. They intended to catch the return train at Fatsan at three o'clock in the afternoon and arrived there with some ten minutes in hand, as they thought, only to see the last carriage disappearing down the line. There was nothing for it but to strike out for the

river in the hope of getting a launch to take them down to Canton; and they were lucky enough to reach there just in time to get on board the last Hongkong steamer to pass the barriers. Could not the railway people adopt Hongkong time?

University and School dinners increase in number annually in Hongkong. The Oxford and Cambridge Dinner, now a yearly affair, comes off next Wednesday; the attendance will probably be not far short of 40. There is an Old Bedfordian Dinner, too, this week, and I hear of other "old boy" dinners in the near future. Another kind of dinner was held on Saturday last, those present being civil engineers and architects of Hongkong to the number of 40 odd, with Mr. Danby in the chair.

I read that between three and four inches of snow fell at Shanghai last Sunday between 3.30 and 8.30 a.m., but it soon thawed in the streets and was converted into mud. We have had the mud fairly recently, but not the snow. Now we are almost inclined to regret it may be cold again before our spring begins.

One sees many curiosities in the way of addresses out here. "Hongkong, Shanghai," "Shanghai, Hongkong," and even "Hongkong, Ceylon," are common enough. But I think that the latest I have seen is better still. It is "Victoriatown, Hongkong, India!" And yet it got here all the same.

The approach of the China New Year is marked by more circumstances bearing Chinese characteristics than the mere frequency of fires that has been so noticeable within the past few days. As the end of their financial year approaches, the police-stations have frequent visits from Chinese who tell most alarming stories about having been set upon in their dwellings and robbed of their jewelry and valuable effects. Mostly these yarns are pure inventions. One woman recently related a story of this kind and when the police set about making enquiries they found the whole of the "stolen" property secreted in the house. She afterwards confessed that she hid it herself with a view to getting out of the payment of a debt which she had incurred and of which the goods were security. A young accountant of a commercial business came along with a similar plaint the other day, but in his case the missing property was a large sum of money. His idea was to get the reported theft bruited abroad so that when he had to square his account at the New Year he could thus account for a shortage for which he was responsible. This youth also confessed his duplicity when pressed. And these are only two cases out of many of a like kind.

I notice some pretty picture-postcards with views of the Bowrington Canal, Hongkong. The view makes the place look beautiful indeed; so much so that visitors to the Colony would certainly not go away without seeing it. The Bowrington Canal itself is now in a shocking condition, being practically useless. The trouble is that it has not been dredged for ages, so that really a great part of it is not a canal at all, but a sand-bank. Launches and other small craft would find the canal were it kept in good order, very useful.

Our late Governor and Lady Blake appear to have had a lot of entertaining to do since they arrived in Ceylon. H.R.H. Princess Louise was their guest when the last mail left Colombo and in their company at Kandy snapshotted a herd of 27 elephants. Lady Curzon was also expected to stop as their guest for a few days on her way to Europe this month. On the 4th inst. Sir Henry Blake held his first *levee* and Lady Blake her first reception at Kandy, the scene being a very striking one.

BANYAN.

A despatch dated Clontutta, January 9th, says:—The Foreign Office here has received an intimation that Colonel Younghusband has resumed his forward movement from Chumbi Valley to meet the Chinese *Amban*, who is reported to have left Lhasa.

HONGKONG SANITARY BOARD.

A meeting of the Sanitary Board was held on the 28th inst. in the Board Room. Hon. Dr. J. M. Atkinson presided, and there were also present Hon. W. Chatham, Director of Public Works, Mr. Fung W. Chun; Colonel W. E. Webb, R.A.M.C.; Hon. H. E. Pollock, K.C., Mr. E. A. Hewett, Mr. A. Rumjahn; Dr. W. W. Pearse, Acting Medical Officer of Health; Dr. B. Barnett, Assistant Medical Officer of Health; Mr. G. A. Woodcock (Secretary) and Mr. J. H. Kemp (Assistant Secretary).

SHKOTONGTSUI MARKET.

Correspondence was submitted relative to the stalls in Shkotongtsui Market, and on the motion of the PRESIDENT, seconded by Mr. FUNG WA CHUN, it was agreed that stalls 11 to 13 be used for the sale of fruit and vegetable.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND BUILDINGS BILL.

The Acting M. O. H. minuted:—As my refusal to countersign certificates of occupation of new buildings which do not comply with the amended sect. 153 of the P. H. O. has already caused opposition from architects I wish to draw the attention of the Board to this section particularly. Throughout the Colony there are a great number of ground floor rooms with no glazed window area which can be counted to legalise the room under section 153. While such rooms are used as shops and are open in front all day the want of window area is not felt, but when these rooms are used for other purposes, e.g. family houses, opium-divans, common lodging-houses, etc., it becomes at once important to insist on section 153 being complied with. I should like the Board, in view of the great opposition which will be encountered, to state their decision as to whether they wish this section enforced without exception or not, and I will then instruct the inspectors in accordance with their decision.

The President minuted:—The Board might make a ruling that no action shall be taken if the ground floors are used as shops, as it is not the custom to have glass fronts.

Mr. Hewett minuted:—I agree with Mr. Pollock, if the shops are not also used as sleeping rooms.

Mr. Rumjahn minuted:—It would be better that the upper portion of shop fronts should be provided with a netting of small iron bars, placed conveniently apart to admit air during sleeping hours as shown on a sketch submitted by me in one or two committee meetings.

Mr. Pollock minuted:—In the case of shops, some relaxation of the street enforcement of the provisions appears to be desirable.

Mr. Lau Chu Pak minuted:—I agree with Mr. Pollock.

The D. P. W. minuted:—I agree with Mr. Pollock.

The PRESIDENT said this matter now came under Section 19 of Ord. 23 of 1903 by which each room must have a window area one-tenth of the floor area and one-half of that area must be glazed. Shops were rooms, but he did not think it was ever intended that this should apply to shops; and it occurred to him that it might be advisable that the Board should make a ruling to the effect that no action be taken if these ground floors were used as shops. The custom in the Colony was for the shops to be open during the day and closed with shutters during the night.

Mr. HEWETT asked if these shops were not used as sleeping-rooms?

Dr. PEARSE said in 99 cases out of 100 they were slept in.

The VICE-PRESIDENT moved that in connection with this matter no action be taken by the Board in requiring a glazed area in the case of shop fronts so long as they were used as shops.

Hon. Mr. POLLOCK seconded and the motion was agreed to.

Mr. HEWETT, who did not vote, said, when referred to by the President, that they must not overlook the fact that nearly all these shops were used as sleeping rooms.

The VICE-PRESIDENT remarked that that did not affect the question, for when people were asleep it was dark at night, and there was no object in having a glass window in the place.

SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS.

The PRESIDENT moved "That the Board, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance, 1903, depute Inspector S. M. Gidley to institute summary proceedings before a Magistrate against any person contravening any of the Bye-laws duly made under Section 16 of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance, 1903, when so directed in writing by one of the Medical Officers of Health," also "That the Board, under the provisions of Section 256 of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance, 1903, depute Inspector S. M. Gidley to institute summary proceedings before a Magistrate for the recovery of any penalty imposed by Part II. of the said Ordinance or any Bye-laws made thereunder, when so directed in writing by one of the Medical Officers of Health."

The VICE-PRESIDENT seconded.

Hon. Mr. POLLOCK thought that the number of prosecuting inspectors should be limited as much as possible, as there was a lot of time wasted while these inspectors were waiting on their cases coming on at the Police Court.

The PRESIDENT said there were only two such inspectors.

The motion was agreed to.

There was submitted a letter from the Sanitary Surveyor recommending that Inspector R. Duncan be deputed by the Board to institute summary proceedings and to recover penalties.

The PRESIDENT moved that this appointment be made.

The VICE-PRESIDENT seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

MOTION BY COLONEL WEBB.

Colonel Webb had given notice of the following motion:—"That the Board recommend the Government to take the necessary steps to improve the sanitary condition (up to the military boundary) of the road leading from Hill Street to Lower Belcher Fort, and to supply adequate latrine accommodation for the Chinese in this part."

Mr. Rumjahn minuted:—There is a public latrine immediately below the Belcher's Fort, in Queen's Road West, on the site of the old slaughter-house.

Colonel WEBB said the state of this road was dangerous to the health of the men of the garrison and the Chinese in the neighbourhood. In the middle of the street was a channel which was used by the Chinese as a latrine and which smelt very objectionably. He suggested that this be covered over and a latrine put up near the place.

The PRESIDENT said that when the M. O. H. was informed by Colonel Webb of the existence of this nuisance he visited the spot and correspondence had been started between the P.W.D., the Afforestation Department, and the Police in order to mitigate it as far as possible.

Dr. PEARSE stated that his inspection of this place showed that the complaint of the military authorities was justified, but the only thing he could see for it was to have continuous police supervision.

The PRESIDENT moved that the C. S. P. be asked to take such steps as might be necessary for the abatement of this nuisance.

Hon. Mr. POLLOCK seconded, and the amendment was agreed to.

OPIUM-DIVANS.

Further correspondence relative to concreting the floors of opium-divans on the upper stories was considered by the Board.

On the motion of the PRESIDENT it was agreed that a sufficient flooring for the upper floors of such divans be smooth-faced cement tiles.

MODIFICATION WANTED.

Messrs Palmer and Turner again wrote to the Board with reference to the application of the 30th ult. respecting the proposed houses on I.L. No. 679 for which they asked for a modification of the requirements of sect. 180 of Ordinance 1 of 1903. It will be remembered that the Board submitted there was no power to make the modification, and applicants now wrote that sect. 180 gave the Board the power, wherein it stated "and may, in any case, make such modification as may be recommended by the Board." It would have been more correct, perhaps, they wrote, had we applied for a modification of the requirements of Ordinance 1 of 1903 with respect to

the open space to be provided in the rear of the houses by the owner. They, therefore, amended the application for the consideration of the Board.

The D.P.W. minuted:—I am in favour of recommending this application to the Governor in Council. The type of house is a good one, and owing to the configuration of the ground, the houses will stand above those in the rear of them.

This was agreed to.

WASHING SOILED CLOTHES.

In consequence of a complaint having been made by Miss Johnson, Fairlea, Bonham Road respecting the habit of a large number of Chinese washing soiled clothes in the north surface channel opposite her house, and the fact that the smell from the channel was at times very offensive, Inspector T. P. Conolly laid the matter before the secretary, and the acting Medical Officer of Health reported that the Sanitary Board can prohibit the washing of clothes there. It would be as well to do this, he wrote, as the hot water from the Bonham Road pumping engine is sometimes used for washing in.

Dr. Atkinson minuted:—If the members approve a public notice will be put up prohibiting this.

Mr. E. A. Hewett minuted:—Prohibit. The Sanitary Board should do what is possible to enable the Chinese to obtain water for washing clothes.

Mr. Rumjahn minuted:—Yes, agree.

Mr. Pollock minuted:—Prohibit by notice.

Col. Webb minuted:—Prohibit.

Mr. Lau Chu Pak minuted:—The Chinese wash their clothes there because they cannot obtain a sufficient supply from the main. Before prohibiting it the board ought to see that they be given a sufficient supply for washing purposes.

The Acting Registrar-General minuted:—Cannot this hot water, which is now running to waste, be taken down to the corner of High Street and Pokfulam Road? It would be found very useful, I think, by the Chinese in Third Street and High Street.

The PRESIDENT moved that a notice-board be placed there warning these people not to wash clothes in these channels.

The VICE-PRESIDENT seconded and the motion was agreed to.

CHINESE FIREPLACES.

Correspondence was laid on the table relative to Chinese fireplaces, etc., with tracings showing same.

On the motion of the PRESIDENT, seconded by Hon. Mr. POLLOCK, it was agreed that in cases where there were properly constructed flues, the Board should not insist on having hoods also.

Mr. HEWETT remarked that that should be conditional on the Chinese putting their chatties on the fireplaces. When there was no room there they often put a row of chatties in other parts of the room. The inspectors would have to keep a look-out for them.

Dr. PEARSE—It is absolutely impossible to prevent the Chinese from putting chatties in the corners of their rooms.

Dr. PEARSE—Then I would suggest that the inspectors break them if they find them there.

SCREENS AND CUBICLES.

A minute by the M.O.H. was submitted relative to cubicles and screens on ground floors.

The PRESIDENT moved that these screens be allowed so long as they were of light material and were drawn aside during the day. It had been suggested that they could not even have a mosquito-net.

Mr. HEWETT seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

HEALTHY HONGKONG.

Against the mortality statistics Mr. Rumjahn had minuted, "Who said Hongkong was not a healthy place?" and he backed this up by quoting figures showing that for the first three-quarters of December the rate per 1,000 in Hongkong was over two points lower than those of the city of London and seven or eight large towns.

The VICE-PRESIDENT said they had heard so much lately of the unhealthiness of Hongkong that it was very satisfactory to learn about our low death-rate.

The PRESIDENT reminded the Board, however, that Hongkong differed very much from London in respect that the great majority

of the population here consisted of adults from 20 to 40 years of age.

There was no other important public business before the meeting.

A VISIT TO THE FATSHAN RAILWAY.

It is with no little interest that one first views the new railway between Canton and Fatshan, especially if, like the writer, one has not seen a locomotive bigger than the Mataukok pugifer for the last few years. As the intending traveller proceeds up the river from the Canton steamship wharf on the old Star Ferry launch the *Guiding Star* his surroundings are so thoroughly Chinese that he almost begins to believe that after all this story about the existence of a modern railroad up the country is a myth. Yet suddenly as the boat emerges from the city and turns round a bend in the waterway there comes into view a veritable train with a smoking engine in front awaiting the coming of the connecting ferry and its numerous passengers. As for the station itself—its name is Shekwaitong—it is only yet in the course of construction, but promises to be a structure worthy to adorn the terminus of so important an undertaking as the Canton-Fatshan railroad. After a view of the rolling stock, the eye is caught by the bright and flowery uniforms of the Chinese station attendants. These officials do not appear to be so alert as the porters at home but they sport a dignity, begotten of their raiment perhaps, absolutely foreign to their European compeers. There is no booking-office. A Chinese supplies tickets as the passengers enter the carriages, and after the usual preliminaries have been gone through the engine gives a warning "toot" and we are undergoing the experience of riding on the first railroad to be constructed in Southern China. The carriages are of a primitive kind but very comfortable and roomy. First-class fare is 50 cents.

It is interesting to note the deportment of the Chinese passengers. No doubt the people of the countryside have had ample opportunity of making themselves familiar since its inception with the presence of the line and its concomitants, yet it is superficially apparent that they have not got over the first wonderment with which they surveyed the newcomer. All along the route one saw groups of the inhabitants gazing curiously at the train and its occupants. The Chinese passengers themselves stuck their heads out of the windows to observe the progress of their iron horse. To European eyes the chief attraction after the first novelty of the locomotion had worn off lay in the beautiful fertile plains through which they were being sped. The plains seemed endless. At this season of the year of course the land is bare of crops except where a patch of uncut sugar-cane rises here and there to relieve the drab aspect of the turned-up fields, or a grove of fern-like trees lends verdancy to the scene.

It is rather strange at first to find that the line does not pass through any large villages or towns as one would expect. Rather these seem to be avoided. But there is method in this seemingly unwise departure. The promoters recognize that it will take time for the Chinese country-people to be reconciled to the presence in their midst of such a modern institution as a railroad; hence the line has been purposely deflected away from contact with the numerous villages that dot the plains, and the belief is entertained, doubtless with the best of reason, that as time goes on the various stations *en route* will become centres of activity and attract the Chinese to them as being the most convenient bases from which to carry on business requiring rapid transit.

As is generally known, the Canton-Fatshan line is not an independent work; it is part of the scheme for establishing a great trunk line from Canton to Hankow, to embrace something like 1,000 miles of track when all its branches and subsidiary parts are included. From Canton to Fatshan is ten and a half miles distant, and the journey occupies about forty minutes. At present the traffic is carried no farther than Fatshan, but above that point there are many more miles of excellent track already laid towards Samshui, the contemplated objective for this branch.

Fatshan is a very populous place, much resembling Canton, equally crowded, equally narrow as to streets, and equally non-salubrious as to smells. To get thence up to one of the sections at which work is proceeding it is necessary to resort to a rowing-boat and be paddled up the river or else to walk up the line some four or five miles distance. The river route is preferable. Here one comes among a group of house-boats where live the white overseers and engineers engaged on the constructional work. A hearty welcome is extended to the visitor, and news of far-away Hongkong eagerly sought after and relished. If one were to take up a bundle of San Francisco coloured newspapers it is questionable whether he would not be hailed as a public benefactor or killed by a repletion of kindness.

As for the track itself, it is made of blue clay dug from both sides of the line. These excavations of course have left a deep canal on each side which are filled with water. One cannot but admire the excellence of the track; the material of which it is composed appears to have capital lasting powers. Between Canton and Fatshan steel sleepers are used; beyond Fatshan Japanese wood is to be utilised. The rails weigh 15 lbs. to the yard and the gauge is 4 feet 8½ inches. It is satisfactory to learn that the reported troubles on the line have not been so serious as we were led to believe in Hongkong. There have been a few sporadic disturbances, but nothing to cause the promoters and staff any great uneasiness. Indeed one and all join in declaring how friendly and pacific has been the feeling shown towards them by the Chinese. Good progress is being made on the work, and before very long the through traffic to Samshui should be an accomplished fact.

THE REGISTRATION OF DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

We have received from the Hon. H. E. Pollock, K.C., the following copy of a letter received by him from the Colonial Secretary's Office:—

Colonial Secretary's Office.
Hongkong, 23rd January, 1904.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of the petition addressed by certain ladies of the Colony to the Officer Administering the Government on the subject of the registration of domestic servants, which accompanied your letter of the 20th instant.

This question was very fully considered by the Government so recently as 1902, when, after the fullest investigation by the Commission referred to in the petition, it was decided not to legislate for the compulsory registration of servants, but instead to give wider powers for dealing with misconduct by the class of servants that formed the subject of the Commission.

This was done by the enactment of Ordinance No. 2 of 1902 which was supplemented by Ordinance 45 of 1902, dealing with servants of all classes.

I have therefore to express His Excellency's regret that he does not see his way to re-open a question which has been so recently decided.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

[Sd.] A. M. THOMSON,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

Hon. H. E. Pollock, K.C.

LAUNCH OF RIVER STEAMER AT KOWLOON.

THE S.S. "LIN TAN."

This steamer, built to order of the West River S.S. companies, was launched at the Hongkong & Whampoa Co.'s Kowloon Docks on Thursday afternoon. The vessel is a twin-screw craft, 175 feet between perpendiculars by 32 feet by nine feet, being capable of carrying a deadweight of 260 tons on a draught of 6 feet 6 inches. Her length is limited to enable her to pass the quick bends on the river, and her depth and draft are also limited. She is provided with very full accommodation, having a few staterooms with sleeping accommodation for first and second class passengers on the upper deck, besides large spaces on the main-deck for Chinese third-class passengers. Machinery consists of ordinary compound engines supplied with steam by a very large

single ended boiler. As she lay awaiting baptism she made a very pretty spectacle, numerous flags flying over her white-painted hull. Mrs. May performed the launching ceremony, others present including H. E. Mr. F. H. May, C.M.G., Mr. Ponsonby (private secretary to H.E.) Major General and Mrs. Villiers Hatton, B., Vice-Admiral C. G. and Mrs. Robinson, Mr. W. B. Dixon (manager of the Hongkong and Whampoa Dock Co.), Mr. D. R. Law (of Messrs. Butterfield and Swire, who represented the West River S.S. companies), Engineer-Capt. North (Naval Yard), Capt. F. D. and Mrs. Goddard, Capt. A. W. Outerbridge, Dr. Noble, Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, Mr. H. C. Wilcox, Mr. Butterworth, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. E. S. Whealler, Hon. Gershom Stewart, Mr. and Mrs. Tomkins, Mr. T. P. Cochrane, Mr. W. Wilson (Hongkong and Whampoa Dock Co.), Mr. B. Layton, and Mr. A. G. Wood.

Shortly before the launch Mr. D. R. Law presented a handsome bouquet in a silver holder to Mrs. May, and, in so doing, said that on behalf of the owners of the steamer, which Mrs. May had so graciously consented to launch, he had the honour to present her the flowers as a token of their gratification at her having been able, among her other numerous important engagements, to find time to perform the ceremony.

All ready Mrs. May cut the cord, thereby releasing the dog-shores holding the vessel. For some few minutes the vessel did not move, the hydraulic jack to give her the first impetus not seeming to shove hard enough. At length, however, she commenced to slide down the well greased ways, Mrs. May breaking a bottle of champagne on her bows, while the crowd on the platform waved their hats and gave three cheers. The vessel ever gathering speed, took the water very nicely, afterwards being hauled alongside.

Mr. W. B. Dixon, addressing the assembly, said that on behalf of the Dock Company he had the greatest pleasure in seeing the ladies present at the launch. The *Lin Tan* was the first of a series for Mr. Law. He also availed himself of the opportunity to thank Mrs. May and would ask her to accept a little souvenir of the occasion. The souvenir was a handsome gold bracelet.

Mr. D. R. Law on behalf of the owners joined the builders in expressing their warmest thanks for Mrs. May's kindness in launching the *Lin Tan* so successfully and graciously. He called for three cheers for the ladies.

When everyone was comfortably seated in the Dock Ball-room Mr. Dixon wished success to the good ship *Lin Tan*. The youngster had taken her first step. She was intended for the West River and would probably accommodate from 150 to 200 passengers. There would be not more than 12 berths for Europeans; 15 or 20, however, could be carried if the sofas were utilised. Chinese first-class berths would number about 30, and other Chinese could smoke their pipes comfortably below. He was very pleased to avail himself of the occasion to thank Mr. Law for the order. There were still three months in which to complete the vessel; six months had gone. He begged to propose success to the vessel, coupling with the toast the name of his friend Mr. Law, who was a stiff business man, having principles to serve his firm in the best way.

Mr. LAW in responding said that he was sure the owners considered themselves very fortunate in having had their vessel launched and christened by so lucky a lady as Mrs. May. They had also to congratulate themselves on being in the hands of builders like the Hongkong & Whampoa Dock Co. Their name was a guarantee for the highest workmanship. It was a comparatively easy task for their surveyors to superintend the building of a vessel contracted for with the Hongkong Dock Co.; and they were generous builders as well, always willing, nay anxious, to adopt any suggestions and improvements, although not embodied in their contract, without extra charge. He could not therefore do better than recommend any of the ladies or gentlemen who might be contemplating building a steamer to entrust their orders to his friend Mr. Dixon. They saw with what high esteem his own firm held the Dock Company's work. Yonder lay the keel and frames of the

China Navigation Co.'s new Yangtze steamer which they hoped to see launched about mid-summer. He mentioned as a matter of interest, that *Lin Tan* was the name of one of the districts on the West River in which a large quantity of their fancy floor matting was manufactured. He hoped that the day was not far distant when they might find it profitable to build a sister-ship to be called after one of the other matting districts. He could assure them that they were always ready to give orders for vessels when the trade demanded an increase in their fleet. He thanked the company for drinking success to the *Lin Tan* and her owners, and would now ask them to join with him in drinking continued success and prosperity to their greatest local industrial institution, the Hongkong & Whampoa Dock Co., coupling with it the name of its genial and gifted manager Mr. Dixon.

Mr. Dixon thanked them. The Chairman of the Dock Company, said he, was unable to be present. The management of Dock Company did not rest on one man; there were many able men on its staff. The quality of work was always high. The accommodation cabins in two lighters recently launched, for instance, could be compared to that on an Atlantic liner. They had, too, to keep down prices. Some prices were good, but for new work there was great competition. Their chief object regarding the *Lin Tan* was to make her a good ship.

H.E. Mr. F. H. MAY said he had quite enough responsibilities of his own without replying for his wife. He found it difficult to make his own speeches, but, on this occasion, he thought it easy to speak on her behalf. She was thankful for the kind words of Messrs. Dixon and Law, and it was a great pleasure to launch a vessel for one of their greatest local industries. She hoped it would be a great profit to both the concerns of Messrs. Law and Dixon. She thanked them for their souvenirs and kindness that day.

Mr. DIXON replied and toasted the ladies, calling upon Mr. Gershom Stewart to reply.

Hon. GERSHOM STEWART said that he was always a worshipper of the fair sex. He was about to pay his attentions to one in particular. The ceremony then concluded.

S. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL.

SIR PAUL CHATER PRESENTS NEW CHURCH FOR KOWLOON.

The annual meeting of the subscribers and seatholders of S. John's Cathedral was held on the evening of the 27th inst. at S. Paul's College. His Lordship Bishop Hoare presided.

Mr. A. BRYER, Hon. Secretary, read the minutes of last meeting and they were confirmed.

Mr. R. T. WRIGHT, Hon. Treasurer, submitted the financial report. He said they started the year with a balance on the wrong side of \$1,137 and wound up with a balance on the right side of \$2,316. This increase was chiefly due to a very satisfactory increase of about \$1,500 in the offertories. Donations and subscriptions amounted to \$4,099 as against \$4,177. It was to be remembered that they would have a very heavy expense to meet this year in connection with the repair of the organ. In addition to this balance they had \$3,258 on fixed deposit.

His LORDSHIP said he thought they had great reason for thankfulness for the very satisfactory state of matters shown in the report. It showed that their Hon. Treasurer must have done a very great deal of work. Pew-rents had been raised 50 per cent., but the amount derived from this source had increased by more than 50 per cent., some 20 new sittings having been taken out; that was an encouraging sign. It was also a most satisfactory sign that the amounts of collections had increased by some \$1,300. The congregations were good and the services hearty. The musical part of the services had been excellent. His Lordship after referring to the good work done by clergymen who had voluntarily assisted in the Cathedral services, went on to say that the Church Body had decided to fix rates for the chaplain's services at funerals as follows:—1st class funeral, \$10; 2nd, \$5; 3rd, \$3. Now that their finances were in a more satisfactory state he said the question ought to be considered of

obtaining an assistant chaplain. It required careful consideration, as they were now to have a church in Kowloon. Hitherto he had had his tongue tied, but he was now able to announce that this was the result of Sir Paul Chater's generosity, he having given \$35,000 to build a church. The Government had made a free grant of land adjoining the English School and the Observatory. (Applause.)

Hon. Dr. J. M. ATKINSON moved that the report be adopted, and the motion was agreed to. Sir WILLIAM M. GOODMAN proposed the approval of the fees relating to funeral services.

Mr. H. H. J. GOMPERTZ seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

The following lay members of the Church Body were afterwards elected by ballot:—Sir William Goodman, Mr. R. T. Wright, Hon. Dr. Atkinson, Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Bryer, and Mr. H. W. Slade.

Rev. F. T. JOHNSON proposed votes of thanks to the lay members of the Church Body, making special mention of the services of the Hon. Treasurer and the Hon. Secretary; to the late auditor, Mr. R. C. Edwards, who had gone away, and whose place had been taken by Mr. W. C. Turner, to the clergy who had voluntarily lent their assistance during the year, especially Rev. Messrs. Bunbury, France, Wright, Anstey, and Jenkins, and to the choir who under the able leadership of Mr. A. G. Ward, had done a great deal to make the Cathedral bright and attractive.

Sir WILLIAM GOODMAN seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

On the motion of Hon. Dr. ATKINSON, seconded by Mr. ARMSTRONG, Mr. J. C. Peter was appointed auditor.

This was all the business.

THE HONGKONG BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The Hongkong Benevolent Society held their annual meeting at the City Hall at noon on the 27th. Sir W. M. Goodman (Chief Justice) presided, and others present were Mrs. May, Lady Goodman, Mrs. Gompertz, Mrs. Siebs, Mrs. Hoare, Rev. W. and Mrs. Bridie, Mrs. Swan, Rev. and Mrs. C. H. Hickling, Revs. T. Wright, J. H. France, and F. T. Johnson, Mrs. Dickson, and Mrs. Master.

The CHAIRMAN, Sir W. M. GOODMAN, said he felt it a great honour to have again been asked to preside at the annual meeting of the society. It was a society which, in a quiet, unobtrusive way, was doing a noble work in the Colony, and had only to be known by the public in order to be both fully appreciated and adequately supplied with funds. There were so many changes among the people of Hongkong, so many persons leaving while others came in to fill their places, that he took the opportunity of explaining the objects of the society to the public in the hope that the list of subscribers and donors might be largely increased. The Hongkong Benevolent Society was founded in September, 1889, for the purpose of rendering assistance in cases of sickness, want, poverty, or distress in the Colony, amongst persons other than the members of the Chinese or Portuguese communities. When he came to read the report they would see how well the society fulfilled the purpose of its existence. It would be impossible to assist Chinese or Portuguese cases. They were too numerous, and those communities had their own charitable institutions. Much good had been done in cases of real *bona-fide* distress amongst members of other nationalities. He commented upon the fact that of the twelve ladies elected to the committee, 13 or 14 years ago, not one of them was at present in the Colony. During the past year the society gave away over \$900 more than it received from subscriptions, donations, and all sources, and thus it had diminished the balance at its credit by \$903. He trusted that funds would be furnished this year by the public not only sufficient to make up that diminution of the assets, but to enable the society to extend the sphere of its usefulness. While indiscriminate charity was harmful, as tending to pauperise its objects, the alleviation of deserving distress was one of the noblest things any society could accomplish. It was in taking the trouble to enquire carefully

into cases that the society did so much good. It made enquiries before it gave any substantial assistance, and thus many fraudulent or undeserving "beachcombers" and others were found out, and the money entrusted to the society was saved from being wasted, and reserved for more deserving cases. He would like to explain that any subscriber or life-member was entitled to recommend cases to the society. A subscription of \$12 a year, which could be paid either yearly or half-yearly, constituted the donor a subscriber, while a donation of not less than \$50 constituted the donor a life-member of the society. He mentioned this in the hope that the treasurer, Mrs. Atkinson, or her successor, might have the pleasure of adding new names to the list of the supporters to the society.

Sir W. M. GOODMAN then proceeded to read the following report:—

The ladies of the Committee of the Hongkong Benevolent Society have much pleasure in submitting their report and statement of accounts, and in doing so desire to thank all those who have assisted them in carrying on the work of the society. During the year 22 cases were brought under the consideration of the Committee and assistance was given in 17 cases. Over 90 other cases received relief through the Rev. T. Wright who succeeded the Rev. J. H. France on the Reference Committee and gave invaluable assistance to the society by investigating cases on its behalf and helping them when deserving. Employment was found in the Colony for some of the applicants and passages paid for others to various places where they had friends or promises of employment. The society is paying for the maintenance and education of 10 orphan children, and monthly allowances have been made in several cases to poor and deserving people. The Hon. Sec. will be pleased to furnish further particulars to any members desirous of obtaining them. The thanks of the committee are due to the various steamship companies for the kind way in which they have responded to appeals for reduced passages, to the local Press for their kindness in inserting advertisements at a considerable reduction, and to the Hon. H. E. Pollock, K.C., for auditing the accounts. A successful concert, arranged by the kindness of Major Chapman and Mr. Grimble, was held in September on the Volunteer Parade Ground kindly lent for the purpose. This resulted in a substantial amount being added to the Society's funds. During the year Miss Anderson, Mrs. Master, and Mrs. Robertson left the Colony, and their places on the Committee were taken by Mrs. Hoare, Mrs. Bridie, and Mrs. Swan. Miss Anderson was on the original committee of the society when it was founded in 1889, and she has been a most indefatigable and zealous worker in connection with it ever since. On her departure from the Colony a presentation of a silver writing table set was made to her by several members of the society as a farewell gift and token of their appreciation of her invaluable services. Two members of the Reference Committee, the Rev. J. H. France and Capt. Anderson, having left the Colony, and Dr. Atkinson having resigned his position, the Rev. T. Wright, the Rev. W. Bridie, and Mr. Hewitt have taken their places. The following ladies retire in rotation from the Committee, but are eligible for re-election:—Mrs. Atkinson, Mrs. Hoare, Mrs. Bridie, Mrs. Swan, and Mrs. Gompertz.

Sir W. M. GOODMAN said that some cases were very distressing indeed. One little boy was left on the hands of the French Convent. The society had had him sent to S. Joseph's College, and now he would, probably, become a useful member of society. There were three cases in which English women had married Chinese, and had asked for assistance. An Australian woman had married a Chinaman, who left her in distress, and another Australian woman with family had been deserted by her Chinese husband. It was very dangerous for European women to marry Chinamen. In Australia it might be all right, but the difference of customs and modes of living seemed to be unsatisfactory. A Frenchman had asked for and received help; and a very respectable German had received his passage to Bombay. The society was worthy of support not only by the British but by others in the Colony also. The small expenses shown

in the report was extremely satisfactory, only \$30 having been spent on printing. The figures were attributable to the co-operation by all parties in keeping down expenses.

Rev. C. H. HICKLING, in proposing the adoption of report and accounts, discoursed for some time on the evils of indiscriminate charity. The fact of the society expending more than it received was enough to make an appeal justifiable. Ladies on the committee deserved the greatest praise; as also did Messrs. France and Wright for their work at instituting enquiries.

Rev. W. BRIDIE also concurred with the previous speakers.

On the proposal of Sir W. M. GOODMAN a vote of thanks was given to the treasurer, the referees, and the secretary.

The following committee was then appointed for the ensuing year:—Mrs. Atkinson, Mrs. Bridie, Mrs. May, Mrs. Swan, Mrs. Hoare, and Mrs. Gompertz.

Mrs. MAY proposed a vote of thanks to Sir W. M. GOODMAN, who made a suitable reply.

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE DINNER IN HONGKONG.

The annual Oxford and Cambridge Dinner took place in the Hongkong Hotel on the 27th inst., the Bishop of Victoria being in the chair, and Mr. E. H. Sharp, K.C., in the vice-chair. The following were present:—Messrs. C. E. H. Beavis (Oxford), R. E. O. Bird (Oxford), Dr. Barnett (Cambridge), Messrs. R. J. Birbeck (Cambridge), F. M. Broadbent (Cambridge), Rev. G. A. Bunbury (Oxford), P. H. Crofton (Cambridge), C. Clementi (Oxford), T. S. Dunn (Cambridge), C. H. Falloon (Cambridge), A. G. M. Fletcher (Oxford), P. W. Goldring (Oxford), H. H. J. Gompertz (Oxford), A. W. Grant (Cambridge), E. R. Hallifax (Oxford), J. Hays (Cambridge), Capt. Hurley (Cambridge), Rev. F. Icely (Cambridge), Messrs. B. James (Oxford), R. F. Johnston (Oxford), C. D. Melbourne (Cambridge), C. McI. Messer (Cambridge), Rev. C. Moore (Cambridge), Rev. S. R. Phillips (Cambridge), Messrs. G. A. Richardson (Cambridge), P. W. Sergeant (Oxford), E. H. Sharp (Oxford), M. W. Slade (Oxford), Bishop of Victoria (Cambridge), Messrs. F. W. Warre (Oxford), Wei On (Oxford), E. D. C. Wolfe (Cambridge), J. R. Wood (Cambridge), and G. H. Waksman (Cambridge). After dinner the Chairman proposed first the health of the King, and then "The Universities." Rev. F. Icely, R.N., replied as senior member. Mr. E. H. Sharp proposed the Services, coupled with the names of the Rev. C. Moore and Mr. C. McI. Messer, who both replied. Finally Mr. P. W. Goldring proposed the health of the Secretaries, Messrs. Wolfe and Icely. After they had duly returned thanks, a few songs were given by various gentlemen present, and a little before midnight the ceremony came to an end. The band of H.M.S. Ocean was in attendance and played an excellent selection of music.

NEW TERRITORY NOTES.

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT.]

25th January.

SAMCHUN RIVER.

An amusing incident took place on the upper reaches of the Samchun River this morning. The passage-boat got stuck fast on a sand-spit and the passengers were landed, while with the use of a tow-rope three Sikhs and two Europeans played at tug-of-war in the endeavour to move the refractory vessel. The bank was slimy and pleasant to dig the heels into, and when the rope broke some sulphurous language was heard. Eventually the boat was got off all safe. By the way, it is a pity the Government does not take more interest in the Samchun River. In time this stream will become completely silted up. The increased launch traffic is responsible for this, together with the herds of buffalo near Lung Tsun-hu, which break down the banks with their large horns.

SAMCHUN CITY.

The new Shunti of Samchun City (Li Yuen Tak) is making himself popular with the

Europeans on both sides of the frontier. The other night he gave a party to which all of the Europeans around were invited. A very enjoyable evening was spent in the true Chinese fashion. Li Yuen Tak is a native of the Tungkun district.

AGRICULTURE.

Some of the barley-crop is almost ready for cutting. Sweet potatoes are suffering from want of rain. The sugar-cane crop is three-parts cut. The yield of sugar from the latter is considered fair, above the average of the past few years.

CANTON.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Canton, 21st January.

WAR RUMOURS.

The imminence of war is the chief topic of conversation among educated Chinese in Canton. The local Press is full of rumours, and is naturally anti-Russian. Even among the lower orders, the "man in the street," there is much vague talk of trouble somewhere in the North, and for foreigners generally, irrespective of nationality, come in for a good deal of abuse. There is an indefinite feeling abroad of hostility for the "foreign devils," but nothing of any consequence.

GAMBLING-HELLS AND REVENUE.

The enormous sum of \$20,000 was offered a short time ago for the farm of all the "gambling-hells" in the city. This system of letting out to farm has been very generally adopted in China. I do not know how far back it can be traced, but it is probably very old, since it affords such an obvious and convenient way of raising funds. The prevalence of gambling is universal in China, and nowhere in the country are there so many gambling-divans to be found as in Canton, the city which is said to be full of pitfalls for young men "void of understanding." It is a common thing to see a coolie emerge from a fantau-shop, pawn his coat for a few cash, and return to the play, and also I am told that every week one or two men are shot or stabbed in these places; but notwithstanding these scandals nothing is done to put an end to this state of affairs, the authorities being content to pocket the farm-money.

LOCAL NOTES.

The Viceroy has as yet shown no sign of going to Kwangsi; his health does not permit of his moving about. It is almost impossible to obtain any news from the Western province, but rumours of the defeat of the Imperialist troops become more and more persistent. These, forsooth, are the men who are considered equal to Yuan Shi-kai's soldiers, with whom the Chinese contemplate sweeping the Russians from Manchuria.

I should mention that the report that Captain Yang had been dismissed turns out to be erroneous.

Canton, 27th January.

FURTHER OUTRAGES.

The eastern suburbs of Canton are little known to foreigners. There are no "sights" for the tourist in a quarter composed chiefly of slums, with the exception of the bind village—not a cheerful spot. After dark more especially is this part of the city, with its low and filthy purlieus, to be avoided. It bears an evil reputation. It is impossible during the night to get a sampan to get up the canal which flows past the mint; the people are in deadly fear of thieves, both by water and on land, and the following incident is not calculated to cause these fears to decrease, nor to justify confidence in the powers of the authorities. On the first day of this moon it was very cold (the 4th day is Chinese Midwinter). The guard at the guard-house situated just outside the east gate felt, as night came on, that the cold was too severe to be borne outside, and accordingly 19 of them retired into the back-rooms, leaving one on guard to "save face." This man, sitting smoking by the door, was presently accosted by a stranger, and before he could answer, a blanket was thrown over his head, and he was gagged and securely bound. Five men then entered the guard-house, which they proceeded to ransack. All the rifles, spears, and even uniforms were carried away, and the thieves were

far from the spot before any alarm was raised. The official in charge was unable to make any report of this occurrence, as to do so would be to expose his own negligence. He was therefore compelled to replace all that had been stolen out of his own pocket. This story illustrates Chinese police methods very strikingly.

VICEROY SHUM STILL ACTIVE.

For some time there has been no official at Wuchow above the rank of district magistrate, but at length the Viceroy has appointed a *Taotai* to that important post. The last *Taotai* under the late Viceroy complained that the *feng-shui* of the neighbourhood exercised an adverse influence on his residence, and he was permitted to retire from his post. Considerable inconvenience has been caused by the fact that there has for so long been no responsible official of equal rank with a Consul at Wuchow, and affairs are now placed on a more satisfactory footing, thanks to Viceroy Shum.

PAKHOI.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Pakhoi, January 21st.

THE KEROSENE-TRADE.

The monopoly of this trade is now entirely in the hands of the foreigners. Scarcely five months ago I first mentioned the existence of a spacious godown here, built by Messrs. A. Schomburg & Co. for storing the oil, and that Mr. A. R. Marty was erecting an identical building for the same purpose; also that keen competition was expected when the erection of the second godown is completed. Messrs. A. Schomburg & Co. confined their import to one kind of oil only, the "Rising Sun" brand, which usually comes in tins and in bulk, and very seldom in cases, and disposed of the oil at such low price that made competition apparently an impossibility. For some time the other firms, foreign and native, continued, nevertheless, to import the Lunkat, Dragon, and Comet oil only in limited quantity, particularly the Comet brand, on account of its comparatively higher market value. About three months ago Mr. Marty appeared on the scene with thousands of cases of Comet oil. A word of explanation is required at this juncture. It is a well-known fact that the natives require "education" in the use of foreign-made goods, and with this end in view runners were sent, I am informed, into the mainland to induce the natives in favour of the dearer oil, maintaining that the oil, though dearer than all the other brands, is a better oil which emits less smoke, and gives better light; beside the advantage of being enclosed in wooden cases, the tins are well soldered, which reduces to a minimum the chance of leaking in transportation and by rough handling. The natives appear to be convinced. No other brand of oil is coming to this market nowadays except the Comet and the Rising Sun, and these are exclusively imported by the two rival foreign firms. Notwithstanding the new development in the trade in favour of the Comet oil, the consumption of the cheaper kind is far greater.

MAN-OF-WAR.

The French gunboat *Surprise* arrived here on the 19th instant and is still with us.

THE WEATHER.

Since last Monday the weather has been anything but pleasant. The thermometer registered 41° Fahr. on the mornings of the 19th and 20th, which is the minimum for this region. With a strong north-easterly gale blowing all the time, working on board the *Hailan* and *Johanne* was out of the question. The wind began to moderate last night, however, and the mercury shows a rise of a few degrees this morning.

A SUSPICIOUS CASE.

Cheong Kwok Fong, the principal of the Kwong Cheong Hin shop, in this port, has been arrested on suspicion of being in league with the pirates, and his shop closed by order of the sub-prefect of Linchow. The circumstances in connection with this case were such that strong suspicion lies against the prisoner, and it has been the principal topic of conversation for the last few days, especially amongst the native merchants. It happened that a junk laden with cow-hides and other sundries had

been attacked by pirates at a place called Sā Kong on the 2nd instant. The pirates, besides plundering all the goods on board, seized three out of the five men—the owners of the goods. The remaining two reached here on the 3rd instant to report the piracy, when they discovered that about one hundred hides, bearing their marks, were stored in Kwong Cheong Hing's shop. The shop-keeper was accused at once of receiving stolen goods and of being in league with the pirates, upon which he pleaded ignorance, but proposed to remunerate the two men for the loss they have sustained through the piracy. The two men further asked him to get the release of their three companions who had been seized by the pirates. This was also promised them, but before the promises could be fulfilled the corpses of the three missing men were reported to have been seen floating in the harbour near the scene of the piracy. Without further parleying the offended parties communicated the matter to the authorities, and the result was the arrest of the principal of the shop, which was effected at Limchow, and his shop here was seized and sealed up by order of the sub-prefect. The prisoner is now awaiting his trial, at which important disclosures are expected.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE HONGKONG POST-OFFICE.—A SUGGESTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."

Hongkong, 23rd January.

Sir—Slowly but surely, let us hope, the Hongkong Government is working out the salvation of its Public Offices. Time was (and not so long ago either) when everyone considered the Post Office to be past praying for. Lately, however, changes for the better have taken place. The Parcel-Post Office still leaves something to be desired in the way of providing separate accommodation at the counter for the use of Europeans, and Chinese or other Asiatics. At present it is little short of a disgrace to see delicate European ladies being hustled, pushed aside, and often pinned to the counter by the crowd of evil-smelling, uncouth coolies who on mail days besiege the office striving to force their parcels into the hands of the first official they see, regardless of whether he is attending to others or not. Surely the remedy is simple. Will our Post-Master or his energetic and courteous *locum tenens* be kind enough to provide it on the suggestion of your humble correspondent?—Yours, etc.,

"PLACE AUX DAMES."

THE HONGKONG SAMPAN NUISANCE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."

Hongkong, 21st January.

SIR,—You would, I am sure, confer a great benefit on a large number of your readers if you opened your columns to a discussion of the sampan nuisance in Hongkong harbour, which might thereby be remedied. After 3 years spent between the ports of China and Japan, one is forced to acknowledge that, in the matter of the sampan service Hongkong is by far the worst of all. Owing presumably to the large number of naval officers and men using the sampans during the day and evening, the occupants of the sampans earn enough early in the day to satisfy their needs. In consequence it is almost impossible to get a sampan after 9 o'clock p.m., the difficulty increasing every hour; and it is not an exaggeration to state that many are kept waiting 2 hours or more for a sampan to get off to a ship; to get a sampan alongside a ship at a late hour is even more hopeless. It is now 10 a.m., and after hailing a sampan for a quarter of an hour, several being quite close and within call, I have had to give up my idea of getting ashore. When hailed from the pier the person in charge of the sampan either refuses to budge until a large number collect, or asks the name of the ship to which it is required to go, probable saying "much farther" and remaining at anchor. The Police man at Murray Pier seems quite

unable to assist one. There would seem to be two remedies for the existing state of affairs. One is that the men-of-war in the harbour should use the ship's boats exclusively if possible, the other that more direct control should be exerted over the sampans by the Police authorities; a 5 cents fare might be adopted, and the regulation fares in detail required to be posted up in each sampan.—Yours, etc.,

ONE OF THE VICTIMS.

THE REGISTRATION OF DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."

26th January.

Sir,—The correspondence on the above subject which appears in your issue of this morning is, to say the least of it, very disheartening, if not actually alarming. Presuming that such correspondence is translated and finds its way under special editorial into the Native Press, both here and in Canton, may we not expect a return of that feeling and conduct which was experienced in 1857-60? What, I should like to know, will be the effect on the average domestic servant? Will he improve?

Such indifference, as shown in that letter from the Acting Colonial Secretary to the Hon. H. E. Pollock, K.C., is what the white people have had patiently to submit to for the last ten years or perhaps longer for the unaltered policy has been: "On no account must there be any interference with Native Freedom; regardless of the extent to which the white people might be inconvenienced or even have to suffer, the steady grinding of that axe must not be interrupted." Nor has it been, and to-day the native servant is becoming dangerous. Happy they who know how to help themselves. The stable-door will not be closed until after the horse has bolted. And, then, in the face of some scandal, something will be done. Twenty-five years ago the white man was master in his own household, to-day the native is. You dare not correct him. You dare not attempt to put him through a course of training where a little firmness is necessary to convince him of his many mistakes or to check his uncleanly habits. You are absolutely at his mercy, and at the mercy of the sitting magistrate. Between the two your efforts at house-keeping are difficult and trying in the extreme, if not an absolute failure.

A magnanimous British Colonial Government decrees, according to the correspondence above referred to, that this unhappy state of things must continue for an indefinite period. What are we coming to, Mr. Editor, and where shall we land? After the general apathy shown in that letter, should developments in the north mature suddenly, which they may do, the difficulties with native servants will become very much greater immediately, resulting almost in a state of revolt. A warning note.—Yours, etc.,

OLD RESIDENT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."

Hongkong, 26th January.

SIR,—Hongkong has many troubles to put up with. The latest is the one particularly experienced by the European ladies of Hongkong, and more acutely than by men, as they put it in their petition. Red tapeism apart, gallantry only might be expected to do duty. If gallantry fails and this stern sex be determined to be indifferent to the comforts of the weaker vessel, as a last resort the fair should go to the fair for relief. That relief is not far to seek. Go to Japan; study European domestic life there. You will find that Japanese maids, young and old, are engaged to do all domestic work, and they have proved quite satisfactory. Import them here. Let them replace Chinese boys. Give them a fair trial and you will wonder if there ever existed any trouble about domestic servants. I speak from personal experience. I have travelled in Japan from one end to another. I have moved in society and have seen in family houses these gentle Japanese maids working with a cheerfulness, sweetness, and obedience all their own. Others who have resided or travelled there can confirm this experience.—Yours, etc.,

FELLOW-SUFFERER.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

At a monthly meeting of the General Committee of the Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce held in the Chamber Room, City Hall, on Tuesday, 12th January, 1904, at 3.45 p.m. Present:—Mr. E. A. Hawett (Chairman), Hon. C. W. Dickson, Messrs. C. Michelat, N. A. Siebs, J. R. M. Smith, H. E. Tomkins, R. C. Wilcox, Hon. H. E. Pollock, K.C., (ex officio) and A. R. Lowe (Secretary). Absent:—Mr. D. R. Law (Vice-Chairman) and Mr. A. G. Wood.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the 1st ult. were read and confirmed.

RESIGNATION OF MEMBERSHIP.

The Secretary reported that Messrs Deacon and Hastings had resigned their membership as from the 31st December, 1903.

NEW MEMBERS.

The Secretary reported that the China and Japan Telephone and Electric Company Limited and Messrs Deacon, Looker, and Deacon had been elected to membership since the last meeting, subject to the usual confirmation by the members at the next annual general meeting.

EXPLOSIVES ON BOARD STEAMERS IN THE HARBOUR.

The following communication from the Government was read.

Colonial Secretary's Office.
December 11th, 1903.

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 30th ultimo I am directed to transmit for the information of your Chamber the enclosed copy of instructions which have been issued by the Acting Harbour Master for the guidance of Officers in his Department in reference to vessels arriving in the harbour and carrying small quantities of dangerous goods.

These instructions have also been issued by the Police Officers on boarding duty who in some cases board vessels before the regular Boarding Officers of the Harbour Department.

While His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government hopes that the Chamber of Commerce will be satisfied with this relaxation of the law he has instructed me to point out that in this free port more stringency is required than at the Treaty Ports in China, which are protected by the Customs establishments, and that it is necessary to keep in the hands of the proper authorities complete control of ammunition and such like goods arriving in the Colony.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Sd.) A. M. THOMSON,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary, Chamber of Commerce.

COPY.

1. Should the vessel boarded have on board not more than 100 lbs of Gunpowder, seven cases of Safety Cartridges, or 6 of Acids, and the manifest be shown to the Officer boarding her, he shall exempt her from going to the Dangerous Goods Anchorage, unless special circumstances render it advisable for him to consult me before so exempting her.
2. Should she have a larger quantity, 15 or 20 cases of Safety Cartridges, he may exempt her at his discretion.
3. In no case shall he so exempt any vessel having on board more than 6 cases Acids, 20 cases of Safety Cartridges, 100 lbs. of Gunpowder, or any quantity of other dangerous goods.
4. He will inform me, at once, of each case in which he has granted such exemption.
5. This exemption shall not relieve the vessel of the obligation to furnish me with a copy of the manifest immediately on arrival.
6. In any case of such exemption being granted, the vessel shall also be exempted from flying the red flag.

(Sd.) B. SIL TAYLOR,
Acting Harbour Master.

8th December, 1903.

The Chairman said that the Government had not met the views of the Committee as fully as

was desired, but it would be well to give the new regulations a fair trial. After some discussion, it was decided to point out to the Government the necessity for the prompt boarding of vessels before coming to an anchor by the Harbour Office official, otherwise the efficiency of the new regulations would be impaired.

LICENSING PILOTS.

The following correspondence was read—

Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce.
Hongkong, 14th December, 1903.

SIR,—I have the honour to remind you that a long correspondence passed last year between the Government and this Chamber with reference to the suggestion put forward by my Committee for the pilots of this port to register themselves with, and prove their qualifications before, a Board having the requisite authority from the Government to act.

It will be remembered that stress was laid on the fact that the pilots of to-day are of inferior calibre to their predecessors, and that there was a growing tendency amongst them to disregard and wilfully ignore ordinary precautions necessary not only for the safety of the vessels in their charge whilst under way in narrow waters, but of others either at anchor or alongside the wharves.

At the request of the Government a scheme for holding Government examinations and granting certificates was drawn up by the Sub-Committee appointed (Messrs. E. A. Hewett, A. Haupt, and W. Poate), endorsed by the General Committee, and forwarded to the Government, who replied at some length to the effect that it would place the Harbour Master in an entirely false position if he had to give certificates for qualification which such officer cannot test. The Committee, in a further report, replied that at home and Asiatic ports this was satisfactorily managed, and that, if necessary, the Licensing Board need not be entirely composed of Government officials, but might be supplemented by outside experts.

It was also pointed out that, whilst there was a demand for pilotage in the Harbour, the Committee were against the institution of compulsory pilotage, also that the granting or refusing to grant a certificate as suggested by the Government could not be acted on by private individuals without pecuniary responsibility, to which the Government would not be liable. Much to my Committee's regret, although the chief shipping firms and agencies in the port were in favour of the proposal, the Government finally notified this Chamber on the 30th of January last that His Excellency Sir Henry Blake was unable to support the scheme.

I am now instructed to bring to your notice, for the information of H.E. the Officer Administering the Government, further facts which have come to light relating to the recent prosecution by the Harbour Master of the Java-China-Japan Line S.S. *Tjipanas* for negligent navigation in the Harbour on the 24th ultimo, which the Committee of this Chamber consider strengthens their contention that the pilots should be brought under the control of a properly constituted licensing body. It appears from the information gathered by the Chamber that this ship arrived off Lyemum Pass at 6 p.m. on the 26th ultimo and took on board a Chinese pilot provided by the Company's stevedore—one of the leading firms of this class in Hongkong. It is worthy of mention that there were several sampans about, whose occupants were signalling with the 1-red 2-white pilot flag, signifying their willingness to act as pilots. On learning that the *Tjipanas* was from Amoy, the pilot affirmed, although the master strongly expressed his disbelief in the fact, that Amoy was an infected port and the ship must therefore fly the yellow flag and anchor in Chung Kwang Bay for the night. Knowing the penalties for ignoring the Quarantine Regulations, the master decided not to run any risks. On entering the Harbour the following morning the Health Officer of the port boarded the steamer, demanded to know why the yellow flag was flying, and on being told the reason, said the pilot was a fool and evidently did not know his business. As the result of this incorrect information supplied by the pilot the ship lost 12 hours before reaching her anchorage. In

coming down the Southern fairway to seek anchorage room, with the master on the bridge and chief officer on fore-castle head, nothing was noticed indicating that a wreck was submerged. The two salvage junks may have had a red flag up, but in the calm prevailing this was not noticeable. Moreover, the two buoys were coloured a rusty red and were indistinguishable from the ordinary fairway buoy. It may here be remarked that the following day steps were taken to paint the wrecking buoys green, with "Wreck" in unmistakable white letters.

Further, on account of the slack state of the tide, steamers were lying at their buoys in all directions, it was undoubtedly difficult to define the fairways or to find a suitable place to anchor. The pilot eventually fixed on a space, but his knowledge afterwards proved to be at fault, as the steamer had eventually to move her ground to prevent fouling neighbouring vessels. On the 28th ultimo, before the Harbour Master, the captain was fined \$50—for negligent navigation in the Harbour, and ordered to make good any damage done by his vessel fouling the wreck buoys over the remains of the *Pakshan*. Had the buoys been properly marked the captain and chief officer would undoubtedly have kept clear off the wreck and taken the ship out of the pilot's hands in time to prevent the mishap, but the pilot directed the ship between the buoys, thus proving by his want of local knowledge that he was incapable of acting as such and, in addition, as shown above, he was unable to find a suitable anchorage.

It will be apparent to his Excellency that masters of steamers coming into this increasingly crowded Harbour must rely to a great extent on the advice of a local pilot, otherwise they would not employ these men. It is therefore very hard on the masters not to be allowed to bring the pilot up before the Harbour Master for punishment, or at any rate to give evidence as to the facts in the case of an accident, and it does not alter the fact that here in Hongkong, with an amount of shipping exceeded by only two ports in the world, we have uncertified pilots placed in charge of shipping.

As has been pointed out in the past, many commanders are obliged, on arrival at the entrance of the harbour, to take the first man as pilot who boards his ship, without having any means of knowing whether he is capable of handling the vessel properly or not. Certain commanders, as the commander of the *Tjipanas*, learn too late of the utter incompetence of the men they have employed. This is not possible at Penang, or Singapore; why, then, at Hongkong? Hongkong has an unenviable record as the only British port either at home or in the Colonies where unlicensed pilots are allowed to ply for hire.

The Chamber hopes that His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government may see his way to consent to the licensing of all pilots plying for hire within the limits of the port, and thus rid it of a danger which menaces its shipping.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sd.) A. R. LOWE,
Secretary.

The Acting Colonial Secretary replied on the 19th of December, 1903, as follows:—

"I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. regarding the question of the licensing of pilots, and to inform you that the matter is now receiving the attention of the Government."

FIFTH CONGRESS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

The Official Report of the proceedings at the meeting held in Montreal on 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st August last was laid on the table.

NEW GERMAN CUSTOMS TARIFF.

A letter was read from the Acting Colonial Secretary stating that the German Government had issued a notification indefinitely prolonging the existing arrangements relating to the General Customs tariff.

AUDITORS.

It was agreed to invite the previous year's auditors, Mr. J. Y. V. Vernon, and Hon. Ger-shon Stewart, to certify the accounts for 1903.

HONGKONG LAND INVESTMENT AND AGENCY CO., LD.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The fifteenth annual meeting of the Hongkong Land Investment and Agency Co., Ltd., was held on the 27th inst. at the Company's offices. Hon. C. W. Dickson (chairman) presided, and there were also present Hon. Sir Paul Chater, C.M.G., Messrs. J. H. Lewis, N. A. Siebs, A. J. Raymond and E. Shellim (directors) 1. Arnold, G. M. Bain, W. H. Gaskell, R. K. Leigh, J. R. Michael, S. J. Michael, M. S. Northcote, W. Parlane, H. W. Slade, F. R. Smith, Ho Fook, Ho Kam Tong, Ho Tung, Ho Cheong Shiu, and A. Shelton Hooper (secretary).

The SECRETARY having read the notice calling the meeting,

The CHAIRMAN said—Gentlemen,—It is matter of regret to your directors that the result of the past year's working falls so far short of its immediate predecessors. The chief deficiency is in the profit derived from sales of property, which amounts to only \$86,000 as compared with \$392,000 the previous year and \$275,000 in 1901. Tight money, the uncertainty as regards exchange, doubts as to the effect of local legislation, and more recently fears engendered by the political outlook, have all tended to inactivity in the demand for property. The profit shown is derived from the sale of only two properties. Then again our rent-roll has been disappointing. We have unlet at the present time houses ready for occupation, which, at reasonable rentals, would bring in not less than \$84,000 per annum, and for which so soon as the law dealing with the over-crowded districts of the City is enforced there should be no difficulty in finding tenants. We are in short a little ahead of the times. In addition to this I would remind you that our practice is to charge to revenue each year all interest on development expenditure so that when buildings are completed they stand in the Company's books at their actual cost, exclusive of interest, a policy which, though it seriously affects earnings during the period of construction, will I feel sure appeal to you as a sound one to follow. Our outlay on properties not as yet fully developed is over 17 lacs, but some of these will be completed during this year, when, instead of being a drag on the Company, they will yield an addition to our income. Turning to the debit side of the account you will see that our charges have not increased, but the amount expended on repairs is some \$4,600 more. The depredations of white ants, which during 1903 were from some cause unknown unusually great, especially on the higher levels, entailed this additional expenditure in order to keep our property in first-class order. Our outlay in respect of fire insurance remains about the same, notwithstanding the 25 per cent. increase in rates, to which I alluded at last meeting. The saving we effected by ourselves carrying a portion of the insurance on our best risks, upon which we fortunately escaped any loss, more than counter-balanced the extra premium paid at the higher scale. Rates having again been reduced to their former level we have now reverted to the insuring in full of all buildings. Those remarks will I trust tend to elucidate the published statement now before you. You will recollect, gentlemen, that at our annual meeting in 1901 you approved of the placing of \$500,000 to equalisation of dividend fund, with the object of insuring a steady return on your investment for some time to come, and having regard to that understanding your directors recognise that it is incumbent at 12 per cent. with the assistance of a portion of that fund, hence the transfer therefrom of \$250,000, which will start the current year with a balance in hand of an amount approximating that carried forward to 1903. They trust that in the near future conditions will so change as to admit of their showing a larger sum at once under the heading of profit on sales of property, as well as of rents, and are hopeful that if they have to encroach upon equalisation of dividend fund in order to maintain the return to you, it will not be necessary to do so to the same extent. In connection with the scheme for the improvement of the Eastern district, to which I alluded last year,

progress has unfortunately been delayed by difficulties raised in unexpected quarters, but the carrying out of the project has we understand not by any means been abandoned. The sooner a start is made with the work the better it will be for the Colony. Before moving the adoption of the report and accounts I shall be pleased to answer any questions.

No questions were asked.

The CHAIRMAN made the motion accordingly.

Mr. LEIGH—Gentlemen, you have just heard the remarks made by our Chairman. The year has certainly been a bad one, the chief deficiency in profit being owing to the few sales of property, but land and houses are very secure and do not run away, so if they have not been sold during the past year, the Company still possesses them and I believe that I am right in saying that until a sale is actually completed, the property remains in the Company's books at its cost price, so that when good times come again, they must do, the Company can then realise the profits on the properties it has been developing during the bad times. The chief causes for the present stagnation in property as pointed out by our Chairman are tight money, the uncertainty of exchange, and local legislation. I will not attempt to say anything regarding the first two of these, as they are better known and understood by all of you, than they are by myself, but as regards the third I know and feel how seriously this has acted and is acting to the detriment of property, more especially amongst the Chinese, who it must be remembered hold nine-tenths of the property in this Colony and who do not fully understand and therefore mistrust (and rightly so) new legislation regarding property. When the present Public Health and Building Ordinance was passed on 21st February last, and was the outcome of several previous Ordinances, which were brought forward and withdrawn, it was hoped by all interested in property that we had at last arrived at some finality and that the constant alterations in the law, which had been taking place ever since Ordinance 15 of 1889 was issued, would now cease. Such, unfortunately, is not the case and on 20th November last the *Government Gazette* contained over six pages of amendments and I understand a great number more are under consideration. While such constant changes continue property must remain insecure and cannot hold, as it should do, the first place as an investment. As regards the property held by the Company, and at present unlet, this will, we must all hope, soon right itself; it is a state of things which has never happened here before, for the Colony has always suffered from a lack of house accommodation, especially for the Chinese, but to-day there is, no doubt, a large number of unoccupied Chinese houses both in Hongkong and Kowloon. It is the old question that has taxed all the large cities of the world, and that is, how to get the inhabitants, especially the working classes, to leave the central and overcrowded districts, and live farther afield. The wisdom of having an equalisation of dividend fund is now amply shown, and we must congratulate ourselves in having such a fund and look forward to the good years which are sure to come again when we shall be able to replenish that fund. (Applause.) I beg to second the adoption of the report and accounts.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. MURRAY BAIN moved the confirmation of the appointment, as a director, of Mr. E. Shellim who had been invited to take the place of D. M. Moses (resigned) on the directorate.

Mr. R. C. WILCOX seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

Mr. GASKELL moved the re-election of the retiring directors, Messrs. A. J. Raymond and J. H. Lewis.

Mr. HO TUNG seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

Mr. H. W. SLADE moved the re-election of Messrs. T. Arnold and C. W. May.

Mr. J. R. MICHAEL seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

This was all the business.

The CHAIRMAN said that dividend warrants would be ready to-day (Thursday).

WEST POINT BUILDING CO., LD.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The fifteenth annual ordinary meeting of the West Point Building Co., Ltd., was held on the 27th inst. at the Company's offices, Victoria Buildings. Hon. Sir Paul Chater, C.M.G., (chairman), presided, and there were also present Hon. C. W. Dickson, Mr. A. G. Wood, Mr. A. J. Raymond (directors), Mr. J. H. Lewis, Mr. J. R. Michael, Mr. R. K. Leigh, Mr. L. S. Lewis, Mr. A. G. Morris, Mr. J. M. Graca, and Mr. A. Shelton Hooper (secretary).

The SECRETARY read the notice calling the meeting.

The CHAIRMAN—Gentlemen, with your permission we will take the report and accounts as read. The net profits for the past year were \$40,988.40 as against \$38,914.27 for 1902, the difference being principally brought about by a saving of \$1,000 in repairs, and an increase in fire insurance premium of about \$1,100. The present lease of the property expires on the 31st March, 1904, and we have received offers from other parties to lease the property for a term of six years at an increased rental. Your directors have, after consideration, decided to accept the best offer made, but have reserved the right of cancelling the new lease after two years in case the property is sold, on giving the lessee six months' notice, and we feel sure that the course we have pursued will meet with your entire approval. Before moving the adoption of the report and accounts, I shall be pleased to answer any questions.

Mr. MORRIS—o I understand you to say that for two years we cannot cancel the lease?

The CHAIRMAN—Yes; in fact rather more than two years—two years and six months.

Mr. MORRIS—After the expiration of two years you have to give six months' notice?

The CHAIRMAN—Yes.

Mr. MORRIS—But could not have been reduced, I suppose?

The CHAIRMAN—No; the present lease is exactly on the same terms—after two years.

Mr. MORRIS—It is impossible to reduce that?

The CHAIRMAN—Yes.

There being no further questions.

The CHAIRMAN moved the adoption of the report and accounts.

Mr. LEWIS seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

Mr. MORRIS moved the confirmation as a director of Mr. A. G. Wood, who had taken the place of Mr. C. S. Sharp, retired.

Mr. LEIGH seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

Mr. J. R. MICHAEL moved the re-election to the directorate of Sir Paul Chater and Mr. Wood.

Mr. LEIGH seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

Mr. GRACA moved the re-election of Mr. C. W. May as auditor.

Mr. LEWIS seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

This was all the business.

The CHAIRMAN said that dividend warrants would be ready to-day (Thursday).

HONGKONG LAND RECLAMATION CO., LD.

THIRD ORDINARY MEETING.

The third ordinary meeting of shareholders in this Company was held at the Company's office, Victoria Buildings, on the 27th inst. for the purpose of receiving the report of the directors with a statement of accounts for the year ending 31st December, 1903. Those present were Hon. C. S. Dickson (chairman); Sir Paul Chater, C.M.G., and Messrs. R. C. Wilcox, E. Shellim, and Ho Tung (directors); Messrs. H. C. Wilcox, Ho Kam Tong, Ho Fook, A. Shelton Hooper, R. K. Leigh, Ho Cheung Shiu, H. N. Mody, A. Howard, A. J. Raymond, C. H. Ross, and M. S. Northcote (secretary).

After the notice convening the meeting had been read, the CHAIRMAN said:—Gentlemen,—The report and accounts having been with you for some days we may, I presume, take them as read. We are still necessarily passing through the period of expenditure, but I am pleased to inform you that our Reclamation Work at Kowloon Point continues to progress

steadily and satisfactorily. During the year we added nine more houses to our property at Yaumati, and these are for the most part well let. The balance-sheet now before you does not appear to call for any special comment, but before moving the adoption of the accounts and report I shall be pleased to answer any questions regarding them you may wish to put.

There being no questions the CHAIRMAN said—I beg to propose that the report and accounts be passed.

Mr. A. J. RAYMOND seconded the motion and it was carried.

Mr. H. C. WILCOX proposed, Mr. HO KAM TONG seconded, and it was agreed, that the appointment of Mr. E. Shellim as a director to take the place of Mr. D. M. Moses resigned be confirmed.

Mr. HO FOOK proposed, Mr. LO CHEUNG SHIU seconded, and it was agreed, that Messrs. R. C. Wilcox and E. Shellim be re-elected directors.

Mr. A. HOWARD proposed, Mr. SHELTON HOOPER seconded, and it was agreed that Messrs. W. H. Potts and A. O'D. Gourdin be re-elected auditors.

That was all the business.

HONGKONG, CANTON AND MACAO STEAMBOAT CO., LD.

The following is the report of the board of directors to the ordinary half-yearly meeting of shareholders to be held at the office of the Company, on the 6th February, at noon.

The directors beg to submit to the shareholders the report and statement of accounts for the half-year ending 31st December last.

After paying running expenses, salaries, premia of insurance, repairs and all other outgoings, there remains, including \$25,552.96 brought forward from last account, and \$50,000 transferred from the equalisation of dividend fund, the sum of \$161,538.86 at credit of profit and loss account. From this amount the directors recommend that a dividend for the half-year of 10 per cent. on capital or \$121,000.00 be paid to shareholders, leaving a balance of \$41,538.86 to be carried forward to new account.

The earnings of the steamers during the six months under review show a heavy falling off as compared with those of the same period in 1902. This is owing to the increasing keen competition the Company has to contend against on all the routes run over by its steamers, necessitating a further considerable reduction of rates since the date of the last report.

The usual overhaul and repairs have been effected during the half-year and the steamers are all in good running order.

The properties mortgaged to the Company have recently been revalued by Messrs. Palmer & Turner, whose valuations show them to be ample security for the sums advanced. The value of the Company's investments in shares has been adjusted to figures well within present market rates, the difference being passed to the debit of the investment fluctuation account.

Mr. Shewan resigned his seat at the Board upon leaving the Colony, and Mr. C. A. Tomes was nominated by the directors to fill the vacancy subject to confirmation by the shareholders at this meeting.

The retiring auditors, Messrs. A. O'D. Gourdin and W. H. Potts, offer themselves for re-election.

The accounts are as follows:—

31st Dec., 1903.	ASSETS.	\$ c.
Value of steamers <i>Honam, Poivan, Heungshan, Lungshan, Jths of Fatshan, Kinshan, and Jrd Sainam, Nanning, and Takling</i>		848,000.00
Amount paid on account of new West River steamers now building		40,500.00
Value of lighters <i>Sun Lee and Wo Lee</i> ..		9,000.00
Value of wharves, hulks, and moorings ..		86,600.00
Value of properties at Canton, Wuchow and Kowloon		117,684.24
Value of coal and spare gear		19,890.79
Value of furniture		750.00
Value of shares in public companies		632,935.00
Value of Chinese bonds		1,034.48
Loans on mortgage		666,500.00
Cash with the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation		5,446.55
Interest accrued to date		1,752.98
Sundry debtors		11,860.33
		<u>\$2,441,454.37</u>

31st Dec., 1903.	LIABILITIES.	\$	c.
Amount of capital, 80,000 shares of \$15 each, fully paid up		1,200,000.00	
Amount at credit of depreciation and insurance fund		633,000.00	
Amount at credit of equalisation of dividend fund		250,000.00	
Amount at credit of investment fluctuation account		149,409.18	
Unclaimed dividends		6,967.50	
Sundry creditors		40,538.88	
Amount at credit of profit and loss account		161,538.86	
		\$2,441,454.37	

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT.			
31st Dec., 1903.	Dr.	\$	c.
To amount paid for repairs to steamers		21,216.87	
To directors and auditors' fees		4,750.00	
Balance to be appropriated, viz:—			
Dividend at 10 per cent. on \$1,200,000		120,000.00	
To be carried forward to new account		41,538.86	
		161,538.86	
		\$187,505.73	

30th June, 1903.	Cr.	\$	c.
By amount brought forward from last account		25,552.6	
31st Dec., 1903.			
By net earnings of steamers		66,838.04	
By interest on investments		45,035.73	
By transfer fees		80.00	
By amount transferred from equalisation of dividend fund		50,000.00	
		\$187,505.73	

DEPRECIATION AND INSURANCE FUND.			
31st Dec., 1903.	Dr.	\$	c.
To balance		633,000.00	
30th June, 1903.	Cr.		
By amount at credit		633,000.00	
EQUALISATION OF DIVIDEND FUND.			
31st Dec., 1903.	Dr.	\$	c.
To amount transferred to profit and loss account		50,000.00	
To balance		2,400,000.00	
		\$2,400,000.00	

30th June, 1903.	Cr.	\$	c.
By amount at credit		300,000.00	

HONGKONG ROPE MANUFACTURING CO., LD.

The following is the report for presentation to the shareholders at the twentieth ordinary general meeting to be held at the office of the general managers on the 6th February at 11 o'clock a.m.

The net profit including the balance brought forward from last year amounts to \$123,951.13, which it is proposed to appropriate as follows:—To place to reserve fund \$15,000.00; to pay a dividend of 20 per cent., 100,000.00; to carry forward to the credit of next year's account, 8,395.13.

Consulting Committee.—In accordance with the articles of association, Messrs. A. J. Raymond, D. E. Brown and J. H. Lewis retire, but offer themselves for re-election.

Auditors.—The accounts have been audited by Messrs. T. Arnold and W. H. Potts, who are recommended for re-election.

The accounts are as follows:—

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT.			
	\$	c.	
Auditors' fees	400.00		
Consulting committee's fees	4,000.00		
Interest	1,178.25		
Depreciation for 1903 written off	15,711.62		
Balance	123,951.13		
	\$144,685.00		
Balance brought forward from 1902	13,518.86		
Balance of working account	131,183.14		
	\$144,685.00		

BALANCE-SHEET.			
LIABILITIES.			
	\$	c.	
Capital 10,000 shares at \$50 paid up	500,000.00		
Reserve fund	35,000.00		
Sundry creditors	7,513.03		
Due general managers	8,963.73		
Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation	19,749.33		
Balance of profit and loss account	123,951.13		
	\$694,621.27		

ASSETS.			
	\$	c.	
Land, factory, machinery, &c., as per last account	258,000.00		
Expended on additions and extensions to 31st December, 1903	2,711.62		
	\$ 60,711.62		
Less depreciation	15,711.62		
	245,000.00		
Rope, hemp, &c. in factory, valued at	195,545.19		
Rope, on consignment, value at	153,075.00		
Fire insurance premia, account 1904	1,746.72		
Sundry debtors	65,853.33		
Cash in hand	2,051.03		
Cash at factory	50.00		
Investment of reserve fund; in 8,800 shares China Provident Loan & Mortgage Co., Ltd.	81,300.00		
	\$694,621.27		

SUPREME COURT.

Saturday, 23rd January.

IN ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

BEFORE HIS HONOUR SIR WILLIAM M. GOODMAN (CHIEF JUSTICE).

PRESUMPTION OF A SEA-CAPTAIN'S DEATH.

Mr. E. H. Sharp, K.C., barrister-at-law (instructed by Mr. Victor Deacon of Messrs. Deacon, Looker and Deacon, solicitors), appeared in support of a motion for leave to swear the death of Captain David D. O'Keefe of the *Santa Cruz*. Mr. H. Hursthouse of Messrs. Dennys and Bowley, solicitors, watched the case on behalf of the widow and daughter, both of whom are in America.

Mr. Sharp said the motion asked his Lordship's leave to presume the death of Captain O'Keefe as having occurred on or about 31st May, 1901. There was no opposition to the motion. It was the desire of all parties that the death should be presumed.

His Lordship—The two sons were on board the ship also?

Mr. Sharp—Yes. There were other children of the family, he went on to say, in Yap, in the Caroline Islands. There was only one child of the family in America; that was the married daughter. The American wife was still living. This application was made on behalf of Mr. George P. Lammert who was the Hongkong executor appointed by Captain O'Keefe by his will and codicils, and there were before his Lordship affidavits made by Mr. Lammert and Mr. Deacon giving the particulars of a violent typhoon which occurred at the time in question.

His Lordship—What struck me in this affidavit was that they say that on the 3rd May Captain O'Keefe left Hongkong.

Mr. Sharp explained that he cleared on the 3rd but actually sailed on the 7th. The boat was delayed. The testator, Captain O'Keefe, lived for very many years in the Caroline Islands, at Yap, one of the most westerly of the group, a little south of Lat. 10 and about Long. 139; that was a little way south of the Philippine Islands. Captain O'Keefe traded there and amassed a very considerable fortune. Yap was 1,500 to 2,000 miles distant from Hongkong. The property, valued on 31st May, 1901, at over \$120,000, was at the time of Captain O'Keefe's death in Hongkong, which he had been in the habit of very frequently visiting on his schooner the *Santa Cruz* during his long residence at Yap. It was a small and rather old boat, 92 tons burden, and at least 30 years old at the time of the voyage in question inasmuch as they knew that this was the boat formerly called the *Southern Cross* on which Bishop Paterson was murdered in the South Seas in 1871. Therefore in 1901 the schooner must have been at least 30 years old. In the year 1890 on the occasion of one of his visits to Hongkong Captain O'Keefe made the will which was now before his Lordship and also two codicils in 1895. By one of those codicils Mr. Lammert was appointed Hongkong executor in lieu of the previous one. In May, 1901, Captain O'Keefe was again in Hongkong and on the 3rd of that month, according to the Harbour-master's books, the *Santa Cruz* cleared for Yap. Four days later she was towed out of Hongkong Harbour, since which time neither the ship nor anybody on board had been heard of. The cargo consisted of a quantity of dynamite, fuses and

detonators. As his Lordship would see from the second affidavit there was a report from the Hongkong Observatory to the effect that a violent typhoon had occurred apparently just in the path of the *Santa Cruz* on her voyage to Yap. On the 15th and 16th Mr. Figg of the Observatory reported that a typhoon crossed the Philippines from the Pacific in Lat. 12, which would take the typhoon through the Sulu Sea in the midst of the Philippine archipelago. Then it got into the China Sea west of Mindoro, and was still in the China Sea west of the island of Luzon, at that time moving north. On the 19th the typhoon had got farther north, still to the west of the Balintang Channel and was re-curling to the north-east. On the next day the typhoon apparently returned to the Pacific through the Bashee Channel. These two channels together formed the Formosa Channel. They did not know whether on this particular voyage Captain O'Keefe went to Yap by the west of Luzon or by the south of Luzon through the Sulu Sea. Apparently the proper course was by the south of Luzon during the northerly monsoon and by the other channel during the southern. Whatever route the *Santa Cruz* followed she would almost certainly have encountered this typhoon. The average time for the voyage to Yap was about 52 days, and the minimum about four weeks. If she went by the Sulu Sea she would probably meet the typhoon coming up just as she got to the south of Mindoro. The weather report in the *Gazette* was that easterly winds were prevailing at this time making it more probable that the *Santa Cruz* went south by which she would get to Mindoro Strait about the 15th or 16th when the typhoon came through.

His Lordship—Has anybody been to Yap?

Mr. Sharp—Yes, several people have been. There is a regular service from Singapore and now there is a steamer running direct from Hongkong to the Carolines calling at Yap, though it was not at that time.

His Lordship—What is the most recent news you have got?

Mr. Sharp said the most recent news was in October last from Yap. Since May the petitioner had got several letters from there, the last of which was dated February, 1903. This was filed on 15th May, 1903. Since May, 1901, he had received several letters stating that Captain O'Keefe had never returned to the Carolines nor had his ship been seen by other ships trading to that group and the southern seas.

His Lordship said it amounted to this, that neither Captain O'Keefe nor his two sons had been heard of. There were also on board a Scandinavian, Mr. Hoff, a Mr. Gillespie, and a Chinese carpenter who seemed to have been accepted by his family as dead. Of course the general proposition was that you required to wait seven years before you could get presumption of a man's death.

Mr. Sharp remarked that that period had been very much cut down. He could refer his Lordship to a case where presumption of death was made after three years. There was a case in 1898 of that kind, but he was not going to rely upon that. There were no special circumstances. The case he was going to cite was almost on all fours with this, the case of a missing ship—*re Matthews*, 77 *Law Times Reports*, p. 630.

His Lordship said that it seemed to him that if 50 or 60 years ago seven years was a reasonable time when it took four or five months for information to travel from India and a voyage out here was a matter that made a man almost a marvel, the time might reasonably be shortened, what with the telegraph and so on.

Mr. Sharp stated that practically the seven-years' period had been cut down to the neighbourhood of three. There were no special circumstances in the case he had quoted. The man disappeared from his home in London and was missing for three years. The Court took the view that his people would have heard of his existence and allowed presumption of death for the purposes of probate. In the case of missing ships the Court gave such leave in from one and a half to two years.

His Lordship—That is in a case of insurance?

Mr. Sharp replied that for insurance purposes a ship was supposed to have foundered if she was missing for one year. He went on to quote the cases *re Hutton*, 1 *Curtis*, p. 595; *re Alston*, 1892, *Probate*, 142; *re Johnson*, 78 *Law Times*

Reports, 1885; and *Watson and King*, 4 *Campbell*, p. 272. The last case was dated 1815. A sailing ship on a voyage from Jamaica to England was last seen at sea on 7th March, 1814, and letters of administration were produced in Court on 14th December, 1815. This case was referred to in *Taylor* as a authority on this point. In the case of *Hutton* this was a sailing ship from Manila to London. She started in July, 1835, and was not heard of again. In February, 1837, the Court presumed the death of the captain. In the case of *Alston* (1892) a sailing ship from Liverpool to Peru was last heard of on 6th September, 1890, and eighteen months later leave was given to presume death. In the case of *Johnson*—it was also a sailing ship case—she was last heard of on 2nd February, 1897, and on 20th December next year leave was given to swear death. They only asked for leave to swear death. There were some questions about the will which they did not enter into at all just now.

Mr. Lammert then went into the box and gave formal evidence to the effect that the ship was not insured, nor the cargo either, on this particular voyage.

His Lordship said he would give leave to swear death as having occurred on or since 7th May, 1901. This was a case which did not come before the Court in Hong Kong often. It seemed that the ordinary law was that when a man had not been heard of for a period of seven years his death might be presumed, but there seemed to be exceptional cases in which death had been presumed at a less period, and among those cases he had been referred to four of which *Alston* was of comparatively recent date. There the ship was last heard of on 6th September, 1890, and he found that in March, 1892, about eighteen months afterwards, the President gave leave after hearing counsel to swear the death as having occurred on or after 6th September when the ship was last heard of. He did not think he would be doing anybody any injustice by following the course in that case, and therefore he gave leave to swear death as having occurred on or after 7th May, 1901, which was the date when the ship actually left Hong Kong Harbour, having taken out her clearance some four days previously. Probate would be dealt with separately.

The Court adjourned.

Monday, 25th January.

IN ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

BEFORE HIS HONOUR SIR WILLIAM
M. GOODMAN (CHIEF JUSTICE.)

PAU LEUNG AND OTHERS v. POW KWOK CHIU.

This was a case which was last before the Court on 10th September, 1902. Plaintiffs' claim as legatees under the will, dated 20th January, 1876, of *Pau A Tai*, alias *Pow Mun Chun* deceased, was to have the estate of *Pau A Tai* administered, defendant being sued as executor of the deceased. Mr. E. H. Sharp, K.C., barrister-at-law (instructed by Mr. John Ha tings, solicitor), appeared for the defendant. The plaintiffs were unrepresented, but one of them, *Pau Ping*, appeared personally.

The plaintiffs' claim in the first instance was to have an account taken of the estate of the deceased and of all the belongings and transactions by the defendant with or without reference to the said estate. When the case came before the Court originally a reference was made to Mr. Bruce Shepherd, the Official Receiver, and it was adjourned pending his report.

In the petition it was stated that the plaintiffs were the three sons of *Pau A Tai* who by his will of 1876 bequeathed his property to the defendant in trust to be divided in equal shares amongst his sons on their attaining 18 years of age, and appointed defendant as executor. The defendant thereby obtained possession of property in Hong Kong, being the estate of the testator, of over \$4,000 in value, though the defendant in his application for probate of the will swore the value of the estate

to be under \$6,000. The property consisted of two parcels of land, Inland Lots Nos. 239 and 280, the *Kwong Yu-n* compradore shop in Jubilee Street, of which the testator was the sole owner, and other property, including shares in shops, cargo-boats, money, jewelry and personal effects. He had refused to give the plaintiffs any proper accounts of his dealings with the said property and had wilfully and fraudulently concealed from them the true amount and value of the property left to them by the testator and had lost by negligence or by unauthorised and improper investments or had converted to his own use the larger portion of the property. Out of the property, with the exception of a small allowance prior to the plaintiffs granting defendant a release from all claims with reference to the estate, the plaintiffs had received from the defendant no more than Inland Lot No. 239, which was sold for \$4,700. On 15th April, 1893, the defendant, without disclosing to the plaintiffs the true value of the testator's property or his dealings therewith, fraudulently induced the plaintiffs to execute a release to him from all claims, accounts or demands concerning the estate. He stated that the only property was Inland Lot No. 239 and one-half of the *Kwong Yuen* shop. At the date of the execution of the release the plaintiffs were under the age of 21 years. They prayed that the release be set aside, that an account be taken of the estate and of the dealings and transactions by the defendant with or without reference to the said estate, and that the defendant be ordered to pay the plaintiffs such sums, together with compound interest at the rate of 8 per cent. per annum, as on the taking of the account might be found to be due from the defendant to the plaintiffs.

In his answers defendant denied that the estate included cargo-boats or jewelry except a gold watch, or was of the value of \$4,000. He had rendered to the plaintiffs frequent and proper accounts of his executorship. From the time he became executor until the division of the estate, he devoted the whole of the income arising from the estate to the support and education of the plaintiffs; and as the income was insufficient for that purpose he supplemented it from his own money to the amount of \$6,571. When the estate was divided and the release executed, the defendant gave the plaintiff a full and complete account of the executorship and the plaintiffs signed their approval.

Mr. Sharp, K.C., said in his opening statement that this was an action for the administration of the estate of *Pau A Tai* in respect of which there had been a recent application in chambers. Plaintiffs were his sons, the beneficiaries under his will. There was a reference to Mr. Bruce Shepherd and certain accounts were directed, Mr. Bruce Shepherd being appointed special referee. His certificate was filed on the 18th December, 1903. He (Mr. Sharp) was now asking his Lordship to approve of that certificate and on the strength of that to enter judgment for the defendant. This was a matter of great importance to the defendant, who was a man of good standing in Hong Kong, an honourable man of good position, who only wished to clear himself of the reckless and unjustifiable charges of fraud which were made against him in this action. Defendant, as his Lordship would see from the certificate, had proved that he accepted this executorship when the plaintiffs were young children. The estate was at that time either insolvent or practically so. Defendant managed the estate and worked the businesses belonging to the testator for 17 years, producing something like \$35,000 from the businesses in that period. He maintained and educated these children until they attained the age of 18 years, when under the will the estate was to be distributed. He then distributed the balance in 1883, when the youngest son had reached the age of 18, and seven years later than that, after acquiescing in the arrangement for seven years, plaintiffs brought this action. The plaintiffs' whole case was one of fraud, as appeared from the pleadings. The word "fraud" appeared a very great number of times in the statement of claim. Defendant was said to have fraudulently concealed from the plaintiffs the true value of the property and fraudulently induced them to execute a

release; also that in that release the value of the property in Hong Kong was falsely and fraudulently stated to be so and so. The referee's certificate showed that defendant's statement of facts was perfectly correct, that his division of the property was more than honest—that was to say, he made for the plaintiffs all that they lived on for 17 years, and the certificate showed also that the division was made and the release signed when the youngest son reached the age of 17 years, according to the will. An acknowledgment from the sons was got and though defendant never stood upon that he said he was bound to take it when the youngest son reached the age of 17, according to the terms of the will. Defendant swore the estate at \$6,000 although it was only \$4,000. Mr. Bruce Shepherd found it was only worth \$5,000, and was burdened with debts to the amount of \$9,000; so that it was absolutely insolvent. Compound interest was asked for on the basis of fraud. In counsel's statement at the former hearing of the case the point of fraud was strongly enforced.

His Lordship said he thought according to his recollection that the plaintiffs said they could not do anything while this release continued and they asked that it be set aside. After enquiry plaintiffs' solicitor, Mr. Thomson, when he had heard the evidence withdrew the allegation of dishonesty, admitting that it was groundless; and Mr. Bruce Shepherd referred to that in his certificate, also submitting that plaintiffs' case of fraud was wholly groundless. Defendants asked for judgment and costs. At the same time there was a technical flaw in the defendants' case. The executor should have asked the Court to fix the remuneration which he should have for carrying on the business instead of fixing it himself, and therefore the plaintiffs had got something to go upon.

Mr. Sharp said he would ask his Lordship to grant a remuneration, Mr. Bruce Shepherd having found that the defendant was entitled to remuneration.

His Lordship—That would make a variation of the certificate.

Mr. Sharp—They have asked for a variation of the certificate.

His Lordship—I think the safest way would be to give judgment and costs.

Pow Ting, one of the plaintiffs, was then put into the box. He stated that he had authorised his brother to bring this action.

His Lordship, addressing *Pow Ting*, said that on 22nd January, 1876, his father died and left the defendant *Pau Kwok Chiu* as executor. Probate of the will was granted on 11th February, 1876, to the defendant. At that time *Pow Ting* and his two brothers were small boys and that part of their father's business which related to getting contracts from the gaol was worth \$400, as had been expressly stated by Mr. Bruce Shepherd. If the executor, as he might very well have done had he not had the sons' interest at heart, had sold that business it would have fetched \$400. But that business was carried on by the executor in the interests of the family, and there was a very personal element there, for the executor had to secure the contract from year to year as the tenders were put up. He carried it on for a great many years and the plaintiff *Pow Ting* and his brothers got a sum of some \$7,000. There was only one technical flaw in the executor's conduct that his Lordship could discover. Instead of taking three-tenths, which was a very reasonable sum indeed, for his trouble and risk in the matter, if he had asked the Court to fix for him the remuneration, and the Court had allowed him, which he thought would have been a reasonable sum, about \$50 a month for carrying on the business, that would have been \$600 a year, and in 17 years that figure would have come to \$10,200. With regard to all the rest of the property, in his opinion, acting upon the unchallenged report of the special referee, Mr. Bruce Shepherd, who had gone very carefully into this matter, he found the executor had done his full duty by the three boys. He had done a great deal more indeed than most executors would have done. The will directed the property to go to the three boys when they had arrived at the age of 18. He supposed the father thought they would have sufficient wisdom by that time to deal with the property. As a matter of fact the executor did give them the property at that date, 15th April,

1893, and took from the three boys a full release which they all signed. If they had acted rightly and properly, as it now appeared, they would have been perfectly content with what had been done for them and would have thanked their executor for the administration of the estate which had been put in his charge. Instead of that they issued a writ on 12th April, 1900, seven years after they had given this release, when they were at least 15 years of age. There they charged the executor with all sorts of fraud, stealing the estate from them, and having practically swindled them right and left. They asked in the first place to have the release set aside because they were under 21 years of age when it was made, because it was obtained by fraud. The release was set aside naturally by the Court on the allegations that had been made, and as it was proved that they were under age when it was made it was held invalid and the executor was ordered to pay the costs so far as they had been incurred in the setting aside of the release. His Lordship was bound to say that if he had known as much about the case then as he did now he would not have made the executor pay the costs at all. But at that time all that was before him were these fraudulent charges to the effect that the executor had taken out a full release from the three boys under age, which was not a wise proceeding on his part. Having set aside the release and so made the whole accounts open, both parties agreed to have accounts taken by Mr. Bruce Shepherd, a very experienced man, as special referee. Naturally, of course, this had caused the executor a great deal of trouble and worry. After a year's work Mr. Bruce Shepherd had been able to give his certificate as to the state of these accounts. According to his account the executor had paid over all that he ever ought to have paid over, if not more. The plaintiffs' own solicitor, after he had heard the evidence taken before Mr. Bruce Shepherd, admitted that there was no foundation at all for the allegations of fraud, which would not have been made if he had known as much as he knew after the accounts had been gone into. Now the case came on for further consideration, and he was asked to give a decision upon the certificate of the special referee appointed at the request of both parties. If plaintiffs had had counsel representing them the only point he could object to in that certificate of the special referee was that the special referee had passed over or allowed a sum which the executor had taken as remuneration—his share of remuneration—for carrying on the business for 17 years. If counsel had taken that objection—even if his Lordship had allowed it on argument—the only result would have been that his Lordship would have said that technically the executor ought to have applied to the Court for remuneration, and he would allow that to be amended; he would adjourn the case and allow the executor to make an application now for such remuneration for his work as the Court thought fit to grant. But he learned from the special referee himself that he thought that somewhere about \$50 a month would have been a fair amount, so that if he sent it back to the referee for alteration the referee would have put in as much remuneration and his Lordship would have allowed it. But that would be an useless expense on a mere technicality. It was his opinion that a Judge should always try as much as possible to do substantial justice between man and man, leaving to technicalities their due place, and remembering that technical rules were only made to further the general administration of justice. On the whole, therefore, he had come to the conclusion that subject to anything Pow Ting had to say he would allow the certificate and there would be decree for judgment in favour of the defendant and costs, these including the whole costs of the action except those that had already been paid by the executor under the previous order of the Court for setting aside the release. There was no stain on the executor's character at all. Except that instead of asking the Court he helped himself to a reasonable amount which the Court would have allowed, there was no flaw in his defence. Pow Ting had nothing to say.

His Lordship entered judgment for the defendant and costs.

The Court adjourned.

Tuesday, 26th January.

IN SUMMARY JURISDICTION.

BEFORE HIS HONOUR A. G. WISE
(PUISNE JUDGE.)

OGDENS LIMITED IN LIQUIDATION.

Mr. J. Scott Harston, of Messrs. Ewens and Harston, solicitors, appeared in support of an appeal by the British American Tobacco Company, Limited, as assignees of Ogdens Limited's trade mark in Hongkong from adjudication of stamp duty. Mr. F. B. L. Bowley, Crown Solicitor, appeared for the respondent, Hon. L. A. M. Johnston, the Acting Collector of Stamp Revenue.

It appears that on 19th June of last year, 1903, Ogdens Limited, now in liquidation, transferred their trade-mark so far as Hongkong was concerned to the British-American Tobacco Company for the sum of £100. The Acting Collector of Stamp Revenue adjudicated that the stamp-duty on the assignment was \$10 under the Order in Council of June 3, 1903, the consideration being nominal. Appellants appealed against this adjudication, and asserted that the duty should be only \$6, the consideration being not nominal.

His Lordship said there was something grossly negligent on somebody's part—he did not think it was Mr. Bowley's—in the way entries such as this were put in the *Gazette*. He would be very glad to know who was at fault. The Stamp Collector had adjudged \$10 on something that was published in the *Gazette* at page 317 of 1903. Well, he found first of all that it was head Order made by the Governor in Council under the provisions of Ordinance No. 18 of 1892. It did not give any section. This was a thing he had repeatedly complained about, that you had to look through a whole Ordinance to find it what section a case was brought under. Looking at Section 6 of the Stamp Ordinance, 1901, you found that there were seven sections under which he could make rules and regulations. It was perfectly impossible for him to say under which one he had made the order, though there was a thing at the end for the general working of this Ordinance. That was not right, because supposing validity of these rules and regulations came before the Court they would not know under what section to go. The Court wanted people give them the section and sub-section when they put it in the *Gazette*. To take the first bit, Rule 19 of the Trade Mark Rules was added, and in the *Gazette* of 1898 in the index found the heading "Trade Marks." He admitted, however, he had since discovered it was under the heading "Orders in Council." But he did not give the number of the page. He would like to have before him the person who was responsible for this. It had taken a whole morning to find out what they were proceeding upon. His Lordship then asked Mr. Han how he had arrived at \$6 instead of \$5.

Mr. Han said that was due to difference in exchange. This was a summons on the part of assignees that the assignment be adjudged to be correctly stamped *ad valorem*, the duty being \$6 on a consideration of £100, such consideration not being a nominal consideration.

His Lordship—Your argument is that it is not a nominal but a substantial consideration?

Mr. Han—Yes.

His Lordship—I may say I am with you as at present, subject of course to anything the Crown Solicitor has to say, and therefore I should like the Crown Solicitor's view as to this consideration being nominal or not nominal.

Mr. Bowley remarked that the only question in this was whether the consideration of £100 was nominal or not nominal. If it was nominal the Order in Council applied and the duty \$10 was correct. If it was not nominal, the ordinary rules applied and the assignment must be stamped *ad valorem*. The argument had been made by the liquidator Ogdens, Limited. Ogdens was in liquidation.

His Lordship said the liquidator has assigned the trade-mark for £100 sterling. Was this a nominal substantial consideration?

Mr. Bowley replied that in the view of the Treasurer who had had to adjudicate upon this matter, it was a nominal consideration for the transfer of the Company's trade-mark.

His Lordship—What is your opinion?

Mr. Bowley said it was not a question of what his opinion was, but of what the opinion of the Court was. He understood that the Treasurer, in adjudicating, knew, although it did not appear on the face of the deed of assignment, that this was a very valuable trade-mark. You could hardly move a step in England, at any rate, without seeing Ogdens' trade-mark. Therefore the Treasurer came to the conclusion that this sum must have been inserted as a nominal consideration.

His Lordship said this assignment was only for the transfer of Ogdens' trade-mark in Hongkong. If it appeared that Ogdens had been sold all over the world for £100 he should say that price was nominal. He was of opinion that this was a substantial consideration for Ogdens' trade-mark in Hongkong considering that Ogdens was in liquidation.

Mr. Bowley stated that this was a matter in which the Treasurer had to exercise his discretion, and he came to the conclusion that £100 was a nominal consideration.

His Lordship said he thought the appeal must succeed. The Collector appeared to have taken the view that this referred to Ogdens all over the world instead of Hongkong alone. He thought that £100—roughly speaking, something over \$1000—was a substantial consideration for Ogdens' trade-mark in Hongkong alone, considering that Ogdens was in liquidation. He therefore allowed the appeal and made an order that \$6 be the amount of stamp duty.

DISPOSAL OF FURNITURE.

Lieut. G. Spicer Simson, H.M. Navy, sued Captain G. Gotsche for \$211. Mr. H. K. Holmes, solicitor, appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr. J. Hastings, solicitor, for the defendant. It appeared that when the plaintiff was going home he agreed to sell his furniture to the defendant for \$350. Among the goods were some pieces that defendant did not want, and in a letter which he wrote to plaintiff he specified these articles. Plaintiff's contention was that defendant had agreed to buy the whole of the furniture at the price mentioned. In the result defendant did not take the furniture. It was put up to auction and realised \$139. Plaintiff claimed the difference between this sum and the price originally fixed upon—\$211.

His Lordship gave judgment for the defendant and costs.

The Court adjourned.

Wednesday, 27th January.

IN SUMMARY JURISDICTION.

BEFORE HIS HONOUR A. G. WISE
(PUISNE JUDGE.)

CLAIM BY A. ROSS AND CO.

There was again called the case in which Messrs. A. Ross & Co., 4, Des Voeux Road Central, sued the Ching Hop firm, Wing Lok Street, for \$708.11, being loss on resale of wire rigging of which the defendants refused delivery. Mr. E. A. Bonner, of Messrs. Dennys and Bowley, solicitors, appeared for the plaintiffs, and Mr. J. Hastings, solicitor, for the defendants.

The claim was for damages in respect of a breach of contract for the sale of some wire rigging. The contract was dated 18th December, 1902, and was for 50 tons of old wire rigging, of fair quality, not too much worn or rusted, and of as good quality as possible, the goods to arrive by January or February shipments. Defendants refused the goods on the ground that they had not been delivered within contract time. When the case was last before the Court on the 14th inst. an adjournment was made to allow of the attendance of Mr. Thomson to give evidence regarding the contract on behalf of the plaintiffs.

Mr. Bonner said he had had a letter from Mr. Thomson stating that he was unable to attend through an affection of his eyesight.

His Lordship remarked that he thought plaintiffs would have to pay the costs of that hearing.

Mr. Hastings asked whether it was any use making a further adjournment?

His Lordship replied that he did not think it was. He was perfectly certain himself about the matter, subject to anything Mr. Bouner had to argue or Mr. Thomson should have said. He accordingly gave judgment for the defendants and costs, because he was of opinion that plaintiffs did not carry out their contract. They should have delivered 50 tons within a certain time, whereas they offered only 20 tons. Even supposing the defendants had taken delivery of these 20 tons they could repudiate the whole contract if the whole 50 tons did not come within the proper time.

The Court adjourned.

Thursday, 28th January.

IN ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

BEFORE HIS HONOUR SIR WILLIAM M. GOODMAN (CHIEF JUSTICE).

J. LLEWELLYN AND CO., SHANGHAI.

Hon. H. E. Pollock, K.C., barrister-at-law (instructed by Mr. D. Piper, of Messrs. Johnson, Stokes and Master, solicitors), appeared in support of a petition for the reduction of the capital of J. Llewellyn & Co., Limited and Reduced, Shanghai. This petition, he said, was made under Section 11 of Ordinance 1 of 1877. He asked his Lordship to confirm the reduction of capital which had been passed by special resolution of the Company. From the affidavits his Lordship would see that a certain amount of capital had been lost or was unrepresented by available assets, and the special resolution which was passed by the Company was that the capital be reduced from \$120,000 divided into 1,200 shares of \$100 each to \$72,000 divided into 1,200 shares of \$60 each, and that such reduction be effected by cancelling capital which had been lost or was unrepresented by available assets by reducing the nominal amount of the shares in the Company's capital from \$100 to \$60. The advertisements directed by his Lordship to be made had been duly made in the public newspapers. With regard to the creditors, the only creditor of the Company apart from the ordinary outgoings for the working of the Company was the Chartered Bank of India, Australia, and China, and there was on record an affidavit by the manager of the Bank in Shanghai to the effect that he had no objection to this proposed reduction of capital.

His Lordship made an order confirming the resolution.

IN BANKRUPTCY.

BEFORE HIS HONOUR SIR WILLIAM GOODMAN (CHIEF JUSTICE).

AN INSUFFICIENT ESTATE.

In the matter of Fung Ting, deceased, *ex parte* Leung Tsat Tai, Mr. H. K. Holmes, solicitor, appeared in support of an application for a receiving order.

After hearing Mr. Holmes,

His Lordship said he thought the petitioning creditor was entitled to an order. The application was made under Section 81, Sub-section 1 of the Bankruptcy Ordinance 20 of 1891, by a creditor who showed that the estate of the deceased was insufficient for payment of the debts, and accordingly presented a petition for administration of the estate of the deceased person; the Court, if satisfied that the estate was insufficient, should make an order accordingly. The amount which had been filed showed him that the estate was insufficient for the payment of the debts, and permission was given when this case came before him last time to serve either some person who had taken out letters of administration or the Official Receiver; that had been cured by service upon the Official Receiver. He made an order accordingly, Mr. Bruce Shepherd to be Official Receiver, and directed the costs of this application to come out of the estate.

LE MUNYON'S BANKRUPTCY.

In the matter of C. E. le Munyon, *ex parte* the New York Export and Import Company, Mr. C. E. Beavis, of Messrs. Wilkinson and Grist, solicitors, appeared in support of an application for a receiving order. He said the

petitioner was Mr. E. J. Mitchell, local manager of the Company. Service had been made by advertisement and by posting on the Court-house door, as his Lordship had directed.

His Lordship said it was advertised in the *Daily Telegraph* because he had been advertising freely in that paper, and his Lordship thought it most likely he would see that paper.

Mr. F. J. Mitchell gave evidence that the debtor owed his Company over \$330 for goods delivered and money paid on his account.

His Lordship—What are the assets?

Mr. Beavis—About \$5,000, and they are in Court.

His Lordship made a receiving order and appointed Mr. Bruce Shepherd Official Receiver.

ABSCONDING DEBTORS.

In the matter of Li Tsau Lap an another, *ex parte* the Sam Choy Brick, Tile and Timber Co., Ltd., Mr. J. Hays, of Messrs. Johnson, Stokes and Master, solicitors, appeared in support of an adjourned application for a receiving order.

The creditors had supplied the debtors from time to time with materials, bricks, etc., for the purposes of their contractors' business; and in July of last year there was a considerable balance due from the firm to the creditors. They began a suit for the recovery of this balance, against these two debtors, but the writ being served they disappeared, and nothing could be heard of them since. The chief money that could be counted as assets was a sum of \$2,000 odd due to the Shing Kee firm under a contract for the building of a house for Mr. Murray Bain. He contracted with a certain firm for this work, and they transferred their contract by means of a sub-contract to the Shing Kee firm. The Shing Kee was composed of several partners, but the two debtors are the only ones that were known to the accountant of the business, and they really did all the work. The money owing from Mr. Murray Bain had already been attached, but Mr. Murray Bain did not know to whom to pay it. At the previous hearing two weeks before his Lordship pointed out that in an action against these absconding debtors it had been decided already that this money did not belong to the Shing Kee. As he was not satisfied that there were assets in this case he declined on that occasion to make an order.

His Lordship, after again hearing Mr. Hays, granted an interim receiving order.

K. A. COLLINS'S BANKRUPTCY.

In the matter of Robert Aloys Collins, *ex parte* the debtor, debtor appeared for public examination in bankruptcy.

Mr. Bruce Shepherd, Official Receiver, stated that Mr. Collins had made an arrangement with his creditors to pay them in full if it was necessary first to hold the public examination.

Debtor stated in evidence that he was an electrical engineer. He had set up on the "Dragon" cycle business, starting with a capital of about \$2,000. Three years ago he began to get into difficulty. He got into debt through falling exchange and bad debts. He borrowed money in June, 1903—\$500 and \$432. The money was for the carrying out of electrical contracts and he spent the money in buying chemicals and other merchandise. He owed \$236.60 for it; this was more commission than anything. All his creditors were wanting to be paid. There were 13 creditors. The liabilities were \$1,965, and his assets consisted of \$500 which he had already paid; and he proposed to pay \$50 a month out of his contracts. He had no property except his earnings. His "Dragon" cycle business was so bad.

Mr. Bruce Shepherd said the debtors were willing to accept this arrangement. They would be paid in instalments of 5 per cent. each instalment.

The debtor added that he intended to settle up as quickly as possible.

The examination was closed.

The Court adjourned.

IN SUMMARY JURISDICTION.

BEFORE HIS HONOUR A. G. J. (PUISNE JUDGE).

CLAIM BY CONTRAS.

The Yow Lee firm, contra, 28 High Street, sued Tsoi Tsung, 38 Green's Road,

trading as the Hop Sing Kung Tss, for \$965.97, being balance due for work and labour done and materials supplied in respect of the buildings on Marine Lot 185. Mr. E. J. Grist of Messrs. Wilkinson & Grist, solicitors, was for the plaintiffs, and Mr. R. Hardinge, of Messrs. Ewen & Harston, solicitors, for the defendant. The case was last heard on 12th inst.

His Lordship after hearing further evidence gave judgment for the plaintiffs for \$100 and costs.

THE MEDICAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY'S HOSPITAL.

The sixty-fifth annual meeting of this society was held at Canton in the College Amphitheatre, adjoining the Hospital, on January 20th, 1904.

There were present:—Rev. E. Z. Simmons, D.D., senior, Vice-President, in the chair; Hon. Robert M. McWade, United States Consul-General; Mr. E. Wyon, Mr. P. T. Allen, Mr. Rankin Leslie, Dr. W. D. Shelby, Mr. J. N. Anderson, Revs. C. A. Nelson, S. G. Tope, H. E. Anderson, R. E. Chambers, W. D. Noyes, H. V. Noyes, D. D., H. Keall, E. Dewstoe, A. J. Fisher, J. J. Boggs, W. W. Clayton, H. J. VonQuallin, Paul J. Todd, M.D., Dr. So To Ming, Dr. Nye Sik Pang, and J. M. Wan, M.D.

Mr. Allen, Mr. Leslie, Dr. Shelby, and Mr. Anderson were asked to sit as corresponding members.

The Financial reports of the Hospital were submitted and approved. The following is an abstract.

Receipts, \$13,216.10; expenditure, \$13,142.36, balance in hand, \$2,364. The secretary, in presenting the annual Report, said that the work of the Hospital had been carried on uninterruptedly during the past year, and showed good progress and good results. A larger attendance and a greater number of major operations marked the year's work. The installation of a new water-supply and the erection of the new College building increased the work and responsibility of the physicians, whose time is well filled with the increasing demand for their services. A hospital store-room has been established and furnished with all medical requisites, which are only issued on orders signed by one of the physicians, this system having considerably curtailed the expenditure since its initiation. The new medical college has been completed and is one of the marks of Canton, the building being in every way well adapted for the use for which it is required. The College prospectus recently issued gives all details of this department. For the establishment of this college \$17,000, from local sources alone, were subscribed, and the thanks of the committee is tendered the subscribers.

The evangelistic work continues as briskly as ever, and finds ready helpers among those who have been patients in the Hospital.

It is noted that this year completes a half-century of continuous management of the work by physicians supplied by the American Board of Foreign Missions. 700,000 patients have been treated, and in the past five years alone 10,671 operations have been performed. About 24,000 out, and 2,000 in-patients are now treated annually. Beginning in 1835, the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions and later the London Missionary Society rendered noble service through their physicians, in establishing the Medical Missionary Society's work, the effect and extent of which has been felt throughout this Empire. All honour be to those who through peace and war, storm and sunshine, stood true to the purposes of this the first and oldest organisation of its kind in modern times. The relation and services of the American Presbyterian Board have been fittingly referred to in a recently published article.

The report of the Managing Committee was submitted by its secretary, the Rev. S. G. Tope, who said that the Hospital had had a prosperous year. The buildings are periodically inspected, and found clean and in a good state of repair, and no large expenditure is anticipated for their up-keep in the current year. A house adjoining the east side of the Hospital was offered at an unusually low figure, and as more space was needed for the growing work, the house was purchased, and is being utilised. Improvements in the sanitary conditions have helped

to make the work more efficient. Estimates for the expenditure for the year 1904, amounting to \$9,900, were submitted and passed. Resolutions were passed regretting the death of the Hon. Chas. Seymour, for many years Vice-President of the Medical Missionary Society. The Board of Officers for the ensuing year was constituted as follows:—President—Rev. R. H. Graves, M.D., D.D. Vice-Presidents—Rev. H. V. Noyes, D.D., Rev. E. Z. Simmons, D.D., Rev. C. Bone, Rev. S. G. Pope, Hon. Robert Shewan, Hon. Robert M. McWade, U.S. Consul-General, Acting H.B.M. Consul C. W. Campbell; Dr. Eiswaldt, German Consul. In the United States, Mr. T. B. Cunningham. In England, Mr. James Scott, Sir Thomas Jackson. In Europe, Mr. G. D. Fearon. In Germany, Dr. Lang. Treasurer, Mr. Edwin A. Stanton, Secretary, John M. Swan, M.D. Auditor, Mr. Rankin Leslie, Managing Committee: John M. Swan, M.D., Mr. E. Wynne, Rev. S. G. Pope, Rev. E. Z. Simmons, D.D., and Mr. Rankin Leslie.

ROYAL HONGKONG YACHT CLUB.

SEVENTH CLUB RACE.

The seventh club race in the championship class was sailed on the 23rd inst. over the following course:—Channel Rocks, Markboat in Quarry Bay, Cust Rocks Buoy, Channel Rocks, Markboat in Quarry Bay—all to starboard.

The wind at the start was very light from the S.E. *Vernon* got away first, followed by *Elspeth* and *Aileen*. *Dione* got into difficulties with the markboat, and was late over the line. She then went in a arch of a fluke, hoping thus to regain lost ground, but lost much more instead, and was practically out of the race. *Vernon* soon drew out a substantial lead, which she continued to increase throughout the race, and won easily, *Elspeth* being second, and *Aileen* third.

Vernon having won seven races out of the series of twelve has now secured the much-coveted championship prize, and her gallant owner is heartily to be congratulated on his success. He has established two records with the *Vernon*, for it is the first time in the history of the Club that a yacht has won the championship without suffering a single defeat, and it is also the first time that seven club races have been won consecutively by one yacht. Rear-Admiral Robinson had many disappointments with the *Vernon* last season, and all yachtsmen are sincerely glad to see how conspicuously his patience and resource have been rewarded. He has succeeded in tuning his little yacht up to a high pitch of excellence, as her performances this season testify. We understand that, unless disposed of in the Colony, *Vernon* is likely to continue her career in the Solent. While we should much like to see her try conclusions in the able hands of her owner with *Duet* and other crabs in the Solent 24-footer class, we sincerely trust that local sportsmen will not allow this fine little yacht to leave our own waters.

In the one-design class the *Erica* and *Min* got the best of the start, the latter establishing a clear lead in Hung Hom Bay, which she kept to the finish. The wind failed the *Kathleen* just as she crossed the line, and she was left by all the other boats. She, however, closed up to the *Erica* on reaching the markboat in Quarry Bay, and these two boats had a ding-dong race the rest of the way home the *Erica* eventually finishing a few lengths ahead. The times at the finish at Police Pier were:—

	H.	M.	S.
<i>Min</i>	3	19	30
<i>Erica</i>	3	21	45
<i>Kathleen</i>	3	22	20
<i>Bonito</i>	3	27	12
<i>Colleen</i>	3	29	53

In the handicap class the *Alannah* led as usual; *Iris* and *Chanticleer* had an exciting finish. The line was crossed as follows:—

	H.	M.	S.
<i>Alannah</i>	3	24	0
<i>Iris</i>	3	35	50
<i>Chanticleer</i>	3	37	35
<i>Gloria</i>	3	42	30
<i>Doreen</i>	3	44	20
<i>Layne</i>	3	45	10

A nice steady easterly breeze prevailed throughout the race, fresh in Kowloon Bay, but lighter in Hung Hom Bay and in the harbour.

HONGKONG.

Capt. Gaunt rode *Nurses* on Thursday morning. This is the first time that this bad-tempered Derby favourite from Tientsin has been steeled by an European.

At a meeting of Yorkshiremen held in the ante-room of the City Hall on the 28th inst., Mr. W. Danby in the chair, it was decided to have a Yorkshire Dinner on the 7th March. Mr. Arthur Chapman was appointed Hon. Secretary. A sub-committee was appointed to carry out the arrangements.

The steamer *Rosetta Maru* has been taken by the Japanese Government and her service between Hongkong and Manila will be temporarily withdrawn. During her absence from the service, however, one or more substitutes are expected to take her place shortly. The *Rohilla Maru* has already left for Japan.

A Naval Football League match took place in the Happy Valley on Thursday between the *Ocean* and *Albion* teams. The *Albions* were no match for their opponents, who seemed to enjoy playing in the prevailing high wind and scored a fairly easy victory. A large naval crowd, with a sprinkling of soldiers, watched the game.

A Chinaman was put in the stocks last Saturday, as part of his punishment for larceny, but when he had been there one hour he collapsed from hunger. The inspector of police at whose station the man was placed, acting the part of a good Samaritan, sent to a near-by baker and purchased 12 biscuits four inches square and 2 inches thick, and a 1lb. loaf of bread. The hungry Chinaman consumed the lot at once, and then, like Oliver, asked for more.

The 27th inst., being the birthday of the Kaiser, was suitably celebrated by the German community. Business offices, of course, had to remain open, but the holiday was observed with full honours on S.M.S. *Moewe*. In the evening a musical entertainment was held by the *Moewe's* crew at the Kowloon Dock reading-room, and later a birthday dinner was given at the German Club. Wilhelm II, German Emperor, and King of Prussia was born in 1859, and became German Emperor in June 1888.

The following Hongkong Volunteer promotions have been made:—Bombardier B. W. Grey is promoted Corporal with effect from 2nd January, 1904, vice Corporal B. C. M. Johnson, struck off the strength; Bombardier R. S. Piercy is promoted Corporal with effect from 17th January, 1904, vice Corporal C. H. P. Hay, resigned; Gunner H. K. Holmes is promoted Bombardier with effect from 2nd January, 1904, vice Bombardier Grey, promoted; Gunner W. M. Black is promoted Bombardier with effect from 17th January, 1904, vice Bombardier Piercy, promoted.

Last week there arrived in Hongkong about 150 Chinese who had gone over to South America on representations made to them that they would be able to make much money there. Their ages ranged from 60 to 97 years. As they were in sore distress the Chinese Consul there was applied to, and as the result of a subscription which was set on foot a sailing-ship was chartered to carry them back to China. On the voyage contrary winds were encountered. The ship's provisions ran out and a condition of starvation appears to have reigned on board. Many of the passengers died at sea, and on arrival here some who were suffering from the effects of want of food were sent to the Tung Wa Hospital, where also a number of deaths occurred. Altogether the deaths numbered about 40.

Details of the Blake scholarship are now to hand. When Sir Henry Blake left the Colony leading Chinese gentlemen promised to subscribe two scholarships for Chinese to bear his name, and a large committee, with principal officers as follows, was instituted for the purpose:—Hon. Dr. Ho Kai (chairman), Hon. Wei Yui (vice-chairman), Messrs. Fung Wa Chiu, and Lau Chu Pak (hon. secretaries), and Mr. Ho Fook (treasurer). Commencing from 1905, a scholarship of \$150 will be awarded each year to the boy of Queen's College who proves himself most proficient in translation from English into Chinese, Chinese into English, and English composition. Another scholarship of \$150 will be awarded each year to such students as will be nominated by the Chairman of Chinese Court of the College of Medicine.

It has been decided that the Cricket Club Dance shall come off on the 9th February.

The visitors to the City Hall Library and Museum for the week ending the 24th January, 1904, were 191 non-Chinese and 89 Chinese to the former, and 71 non-Chinese and 2,313 Chinese to the latter institution.

Mr. F. Pratt, war-correspondent of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and Captain Archibald, war-correspondent of the *New York Herald*, arrived in Hongkong on the 28th inst. by the Eastern & Australian s.s. *Empire*.

The only case of communicable disease in Hongkong last week was one of diphtheria (European). With remarkable foresight Shanghai, Manila (where plague now exists) Siam, and Indo-China keep up sanitary measures against us.

On the 26th inst. there arrived from Bangkok on the *Pitsanulok* Dr. H. Adamsen, Inspector-General of Siamese Government Hospitals, who is on a mission to Manila to examine into the treatment there given for the cattle-disease commonly known as "rinderpest." This disease has been very fatal in Siam during the past year, and the Government is exceedingly anxious to discover a means of alleviating it. Dr. Adamsen left Hongkong for Manila by the first boat and will stay in the Philippines for about a month. He is accompanied by Dr. Luang Vikhanes, Inspector of Government Hospitals.

The address of the community of Hongkong to H.E. Sir Henry A. Blake, G.C.M.G., is on view at the P. & O. offices. It is a handsome testimonial and well worth inspection. A sandal-wood box bearing Sir Henry's monogram in silver on the lid contains the address, which has covers of green velvet heavily embossed with silver, the centre-piece being a representation of the Hongkong emblem, and lined with satin. There are altogether 1,267 signatures—668 Europeans and Indians, 93 Chinese in English characters, and 506 in Chinese characters.

MISCELLANEOUS.

It appears that the Chinese ringleader in the recent Amoy riot was beheaded next day. The *Taotai* specially requested the foreign community to continue the races, in order to impress the rioters, on that day, when he put a force of 5,000 troops on the ground.

An Act has been drafted, and laid before the Civil Commission in Manila, by Vice-Governor Ide, providing for the payment of all contracts, debts, and obligations in Philippine pesos, where the same are contracted in currency which is not legal tender. The purpose of this Act is to protect both debtors and creditors against the fluctuations in the value of the Mexican dollar.

Bishop Dougherty, of Vigan, who passed through Hongkong last October, en route for Manila, has been stoned by a mob in the town of Laoag. He was not injured, one stone only striking him on the leg. The province of Ilocos Norte, if the reports which have reached Manila from the Aglipayanos are to be believed, is in an uproar. The towns of Badoz, Batak, San Nicolas, and Paway also mobbed and molested the distinguished Roman Catholic Bishop.

The result of the Shanghai Municipal Election was declared on the 21st inst., the following nine being elected for the ensuing twelve months:—Mr. A. M. Marshall 409 votes; Mr. J. Prentice 349; Mr. D. Landale 343; Mr. O. Messer 343; Mr. F. Anderson 330; Mr. H. De Gray 329; Mr. C. W. Wrightson 324; Mr. A. W. Burkill 307; Mr. E. S. Little 286. The two unsuccessful candidates were Messrs. S. A. Hardoon (261 votes) and A. C. Platt (241 votes).

The *Kobe Chronicle* says:—Although they have had far more trouble with plague in Kobe, the rat-catchers do not seem to be so expert in the Colony of Victoria as they are here. During the fortnight ended December 28th, only 558 rats were caught in Victoria, of which 6 were infected with plague, while 234 were captured in Kowloon, 3 being plague-infected making a total of 792 caught during the fortnight. The haul of rats in Kobe amounts to from 1,000 to 1,500 per week.

COMMERCIAL.

SILK.

CANTON, 15th January, 1904.—Re-reels.—The only transactions to report are in Yee Wo Hing's Blue Ticket, 10 bales Extra @ \$800 and 40 bales No. 1 @ \$765. Filatures.—Since our last report our market has remained rather quiet owing to the high exchange and the firmness of the dealers. No important transactions have been made. Short-reels.—No important inquiry from America. Waste Silk.—Market quiet but dealers continue to be very firm.

Messrs. A. R. Burkill & Son in their circular of the 21st of January, state:—The home markets are dull. Raw Silk.—A further decline in prices coupled with a fall in exchange of one penny has brought about only a small business in Tsatlees, showing a want of confidence in present sterling prices on the part of consumers. Yellow Silks.—are neglected. Hand Filature.—A fair amount of business has been put through crack chops and new style filatures for America. The very low exchange ruling for forward delivery has enabled buyers to fill orders, and about 1,200 bales have been booked. Steam Filatures.—A few small transactions are reported, but until holders modify their ideas, buyers will only operate from hand to mouth. Waste Silk.—Nothing doing, supplies of all kinds continuing very small.

SUGAR.

Hongkong 19th January.—There is no change in the prices as when last reported.

Shekloong, No. 1, White.....	\$8.60 to \$8.65 pcls.
Do. " 2, White.....	7.55 to 7.60 "
Do. " 1, Brown.....	6.05 to 6.10 "
Do. " 2, Brown.....	5.85 to 5.90 "
Swatow, No. 1, White.....	8.50 to 8.55 "
Do. " 2, White.....	7.55 to 7.60 "
Do. " 1, Brown.....	5.90 to 5.95 "
Do. " 2, Brown.....	5.75 to 5.80 "
Foochow Sugar Candy.....	12.85 to 12.90 "
Shekloong ".....	10.65 to 10.70 "

RICE.

SAIGON, 15th January.

Messrs. Wm. G. Hale and Co.'s in their fortnightly circular state:—During the period under review our market kept rising gradually, and, at the close, shows much more firmness, although there is a general calmness of demand. This state of things is to be attributed to the following causes. Our harvest proves to be later than first anticipated, and new grain is coming to market but in small parcels of 3,000 to 4,000 Piculs daily. There being contracts falling due shortly millers are obliged to buy at any rate to cover their requirements. On the other hand, the Hongkong market, owing to a fair demand for Japan, having gone up considerably, Chinese can well afford to ship their rice to that destination and avoid selling it on the spot unless at the equivalent of Hongkong prices. There has been a fair inquiry from Japan and a few transactions have been put through. As for Europe, our present prices are far too wide apart from limits coming therefrom, moreover as exchange has advanced and closes with an upward tendency. Purchases for France amount, so far, to about 30,000 tons for shipments extending up to April. If we judge by the tonnage engaged for forward loading, there ought to be yet more purchases to be made for that direction.

The quotations for March are:—

No.	White unsifted (ordinaire)	per picul.
	steam milled (mixed)	
5 %	Cargo steamer milled (mixed)	\$3.65
10 %	" " " "	\$3.45
20 %	" " " "	\$3.15
	" " " "	\$3.05

The following are the settlements per picul Rice, British str. Sishan 25,000 picul to Hongkong at 7 cents. British str. An Pho 25,000 piculs to Hongkong at 7 cents. French str. Binh Thuan 30,000 picul to Hongkong at 7 cents. French str. Quang Nam 25,000 piculs to one port Philippines at 26 cents. German str. China 32,000 picul to Hongkong at 7 cents.

Hongkong 19th January.—The holders are to sell up their stocks before the China-New Year and prices are consequently declining.

Saigon, Ordinary.....	\$2.95 to \$3.00
" Round, good quality.....	4.25 to 4.30
" Long.....	4.45 to 4.50
Siam, Field mill cleaned, No. 2.....	3.45 to 3.50
" Garden, " No. 1.....	4.35 to 4.40
" White,.....	4.55 to 4.60
" Fine Cargo.....	4.95 to 5.00

OPIUM.

29th January.—

Quotations are:—Allowance	net. to 1 catty.
Malwa New.....	\$930 to \$950 per picul.
Malwa Old.....	\$970 to \$990 do.
Malwa Older.....	\$1,010 to \$1,030 do.
Malwa V. Old.....	\$1,050 to \$1,070 do.
Persian fine quality.....	\$910 to — do.
Persian extra fine.....	\$920 to — do.
Patna New.....	\$1,300 to — per chest.
Patna Old.....	— to — do.
Benares New.....	\$1,297 to — do.
Benares Old.....	— to — do.

HONGKONG, 28th January.

Since the 14th of January, the movements in our various Opium markets have been as follows:—

Stocks as per circular of	Malwa.	Patna.	Benares.	Persian.
14th Jan., 1904.....	1,729	731	402	2,006
Jan. 17th Imports per Malla.....	574	—	—	128
" 20th " " Lightning.....	—	10	30	—
" 27th " " Farra.....	—	297	83	—
" 28th " " Kunsang.....	—	694	234	—
Less Exports to Shanghai.....	2,103	1,874	359	2,134
Less Exports to East and West Coast Ports including Local Consumption for the fortnight.....	64	110	98	—
Estimated Stocks this day.....	1,827	1063	639	1,891

Bengal.—A further rise has to be reported owing to light stocks here and at Shanghai, and small bargains in the hands of the Chinese. We quote Patna @ \$1295 and Benares @ \$1235.

Malwa.—The market is quiet and quotations are:—

New.....	\$925
2-3 years old.....	\$970
4 " ".....	\$1,010
Oldest.....	\$1,060

Persian.—The Market in steady at \$910/20 for good bricks and cones.

COTTON.

HONGKONG, 29th January.—Absolutely no demand, prices are easier by \$2 per picul. Stock about 2,700 bales.

Bombay.....	25.00 to 27.00 picul
Bengal (New), Rangoon.....	25.00 to 29.00 "
and Dacca.....	"
Shanghai and Japanese.....	28.00 to 30.00 "
Tungchow and Ningpo.....	28.00 to 30.00 "

YARN.

Mr. Eduljee in his report, dated Hongkong, Jan. 28th says:—As premised the long expected winter demand has set in, but is characterized by extreme caution on the part of both buyers and sellers, as the vagaries of exchange, and the uncertainty attaching to the political situation, are still greatly hampering trade. The sales reported below were effected during the first portion of the interval, or are the result of earlier negotiations and reports withheld. Values have appreciated \$1 to \$2 per bale, but are still much under replacing cost. Here and there buying continues on a small scale, but the market generally closes quiet but firm, and the business of this native year may be considered to have almost come to an end pending the revival for clearance after China New Year.

Local Manufacture.—The local mill is doing nothing, and although last quotations are maintained, the feeling is weak.

Japanese Yarn.—More done at slightly irregular figures than last mail, but generally a shade firmer. Business has been entirely confined to No. 20s, of which about 1,500 bales are reported sold, say Settsu at \$136; Miike at \$135; Kanegafachi at \$135; and Ashai at \$134.

Raw Cotton.—There is no country demand whatever for Indian descriptions, and some importers are getting very anxious and have been pressing sales at a decline of \$1 to \$2 per picul, and a few parcels of superfine Bengal aggregating about 900 bales have been purchased by the local mill at from \$27 to \$28½, leaving a stock of about 1,000 bales on the market. China Cotton has also suffered in sympathy, and sales of about 200 bales Ningpo at from \$31½ to \$30 are reported; stock 300 bales. Quotations are:—Indian \$26 to \$29 and China \$28 to \$30.

Exchange on India has fluctuated wildly during the interval, and closes to-day at Rs 133½ for T/T and Rs. 133½ for Post. On Shanghai 71½ and on Yokohama 89½.

The undernoted business in imported and local spinnings is reported from Shanghai during the fortnight ended the 15th instant, viz:—

Indian.—Market moderately active and prices firm. Total sales 5,230 bales, comprising 2,785 bales No. 10s, 256 bales No. 12s, 160 bales No. 16s, and 2,020 bales No. 20s. Close steady. Unsold stock 50,000 bales.

Japanese.—Sales reported are about 2,500 bales, say No. 10s at from Tls. 86 to 91, and No. 20s at from Tls. 92 to 95, prices showing a decline of one to three Taels and market closing weak.

Local:—No sales from first hands have taken place, and the position generally is considered weak.

MISCELLANEOUS IMPORTS.

Messrs. Noël, Murray & Co., in their piece goods trade report of 21st January, state:—As remarked by the representative of one of the leading import houses here—"the market could not be worse if war was actually going on in Manchuria, everything is at an absolute standstill!" The censorate in Japan is keeping everything of importance from becoming known, consequently there is a semblance of a more peaceful prospect, but there are very few who think for a moment that Russia will, or can, agree to the Japanese "irreducible minimum" terms after having gone so far. But however that may be, from one cause or another this place has been denuded of ready money with the result that trade is practically stopped, native interest ruling as high as 36½ per annum again during the greater part of the interval. The silver market, too, has been subjected to some extraordinary shocks with, of course, similar convulsions in our sterling rates, the Foreign Banks making sure that whatever happens they won't be left by offering too high prices for forward business, and so everyone is just "sitting on the fence" at present. A good demand has continued for Indian Yarns for Szechuen, and a fair quantity has again been bought, but at very unsatisfactory prices compared with the replacing cost. Clearances of goods generally have almost ceased for the present and everything points to a very quiet time, until after China New Year, at all events. The Manchester market remains in the same strong position, quotations coming very high, but some of the leading manufacturers appear to be quoting prohibitive rates purposely. Cotton is advancing still, the quotation for Mid-American in Liverpool being 7.64d., but Egyptian remains the same, 9 1/16d. There do not seem to be any special advices from New York, and no fresh quotations have reached us.

HONGKONG QUOTATIONS.

HONGKONG, 29th January.

Beans.....	\$34
Borax.....	\$18 @ 19
Camphor (China).....	\$—
" (Formosa).....	\$—
Cassia (First quality).....	\$97 @ 100
" (Second ").....	\$25
" Oil.....	\$—
Cloves.....	\$15 @ 35
Fennel Seed Oil.....	\$310 @ 315
Galangale.....	\$3 @ 6
Garlic.....	\$—
Glue.....	\$26
Grapes.....	\$10 @ 19
Ivory.....	\$300 @ 750
Kissmiss.....	\$18
Olibanum.....	\$5 @ 25
Rosa Oil.....	\$60 @ 175
Saltpetre.....	\$104 @ 114
Sandal wood.....	\$27 @ 30
" Oil.....	\$350 @ 400
Senna Leaves.....	\$2 @ 6
Sugar Candy.....	\$9½ @ 10½
Vermilion.....	\$89 @ 87
Wax.....	\$43 @ 49

MISCELLANEOUS EXPORTS.

Per steamer *Bayern*, sailed on 20th January. For Suez:—1 case chinaware. For Genoa:—75 bales raw silk, 3 packages rattanware, 1 case curios, 1 case samples. For Antwerp:—131 bales bamboo scraps, 10 cases chinaware, 1 case silk. For Antwerp/Hamburg:—27 bales feathers, 25 cases bristles. For Amsterdam:—12 cases chinaware, 2 cases copperware, 2 cases ivoryware. For Rotterdam:—250 bales bamboo scraps, 12 cases chinaware. For Bremen:—38 rolls matting, 1 case chinaware, 1 case silverware, 1 case grass cloth. For Bremen/Hamburg:—60 bales feathers. For Hamburg:—87 bales canes, 67 bales feathers, 50 rolls matting, 3 boxes feathers, 1 case lacquerware. For London:—100 boxes essential oil. For Copenhagen:—1 cask preserves.

Per steamer *Polynesian*, sailed on 26th Jan. For Marseilles:—165 bales raw silk, 7 packages silk piece goods, 43 packages human hair, 50 packages staraniseed, 5 packages feathers, 14 packages sundries. For Lyons:—100 bales raw silk. For London:—13 packages bristles.

HANKOW, 20th January. - The prices quoted are for the net shipping weight excluding cost of packing for export:—

Cowhides, best selected (Winter cargo) Tls	32.00
Do. seconds	28.00
Buffalo hides, best selected	22.00
Goatskins, untanned (chiefly white colour) ..	58.50
Buffalo Horns (average 3lbs. each)	10.20
White China Grass (Wuchang and/or Poochi)	12.00
White China Grass (Sinshan and/or Chayun)	11.50
Green China Grass (Szechuen)	11.50
Jute	5.00
White Vegetable Tallow (Kinchow)	11.50
White Vegetable Tallow (Pingchow and/or Macheng)	11.20
White Vegetable Tallow (Mongyu)	9.50
Green Vegetable Tallow (Kiyu)	15.00
Animal Tallow	10.80
Gallnuts (usual shape)	19.00
Do. (Plum) do.	20.50
Black Bristles	118.00
Feathers (Grey and/or White Duck) ..	19.50
Turmeric	3.80
Sesamum Seed	4.30
Sesamum Seed Oil	8.00
Vegetable Tallow Seed Oil	7.90
Wood Oil	8.00
Tea Oil	8.90

SHARE REPORTS.

HONGKONG, 29th January, 1904.—There is no appreciable change to report in the general condition of our market, and but little business has been transacted during the week under review.

BANKS.—Hongkong and Shanghai have ruled weak, and after small sales at \$650 close with probable sellers at \$645. London has receded to £62. Nationals are unchanged at \$35 buyers.

MARINE INSURANCES.—Unions have sold and are still procurable at \$490. Cantons have been placed at \$175, and are still on offer at this figure in small parcels. China Traders have sellers at \$56 with probable buyers at \$55.

FIRE INSURANCES.—Hongkongs are firm with buyers at \$302½. Chinas are steadier, and small lots can be placed at \$92.

SHIPPING.—Hongkong, Canton and Macao have sold at \$30½, and close with sellers at \$31. Indo-Chinas, after sales at \$72 and \$7½ are enquired for at \$72½, sellers demanding \$73½. China and Manilas have sold at \$18 and \$20, and close easier with sales at \$19. Douglasses after sales at \$30 and \$30½ are quoted at \$31 sellers. Star Ferries are quiet at \$30 and \$19 for the old and new shares respectively. Shell Transports are quoted at 20/- buyers ex the interim dividend of 1/- per share for 1903, paid in London on the 1st January, 1904.

REFINERIES.—China Sugars have attracted some attention during the interval and after advancing to \$108 with sales are easier with probable sellers at \$105. Luzons are unchanged at \$10 sellers.

MINING.—In the absence of business there is no change to report in quotations under this head.

DOCKS, WHARVES AND GODOWNS.—Hongkong and Whampoa Docks have sold at \$209 and \$210, and close with some settlement shares in the market at the former rate. Hongkong and Kowloon Wharves have sold and are in further request at \$95. New Amoy Docks are easier with sales at \$37½. Farnhams after sales at Tls 123 cash and Tls 129 May have advanced to Tls 125 cash with buyers in the North.

LANDS, HOTELS AND BUILDINGS.—Hongkong Lands continue quiet, and are procurable at \$150 ex the dividend of \$6 per share for the second half of 1903 paid on the 28th instant. Kowloon Lands are easier with sales at \$5½. West Points after advancing to \$58½ are now on offer at \$56 ex the final div. of \$1.20 per share for 1903 paid on the 28th instant. Humphreys Estates have sold and have further sellers at \$11½, the new shares have been disposed of at \$2.55 and \$2.50. Hongkong Hotels are unchanged at \$147 sellers. Shanghai Lands have been booked at Tls 110.

COTTON MILLS.—Hongkongs are procurable at \$15½. Shanghai quotes Ewos Tls 33, Internationals Tls 25, Laon-Kung-Mows Tls 35, and Soy Chees Tls 170.

MISCELLANEOUS.—Green Island Cements have sold and have further buyers at \$25. A. S. Watsons have been booked at \$14½. Electrics (old) are steady at \$12½ and (new) at \$7. Ices continue on offer at \$240. Steam Water Boats are wanted at \$15½, and Watkins at \$7½. China Providents have sold at \$9, and Powells at \$9½, the latter closing with buyers at \$9.60. Philippine Co., Ltd. shares can be placed at \$10.

MEMOS.—National Bank of China Ltd. ordinary yearly meeting on the 30th instant. Longkong Rope Co., Ltd. ordinary yearly meeting on the 6th February. Hongkong Canton and Macao Steamboat Co. Ltd. ordinary yearly meeting on the 6th February.

Closing quotations are as follows:—

COMPANY.	PAID UP.	QUOTATIONS.
Banks—		
Hongkong & Shanghai	\$125	\$645, L'don, £62.
Natl. Bank of China		
A. Shares	£8	\$35, buyers
B. Shares	£8	\$35, buyers
Found. Shares	£1	\$10
Insurance—		
Union	\$100	\$400, sales & sellers
China Traders	\$25	\$56, sellers
North China	\$25	Tls. 69
Yangtze	\$60	\$135
Canton	\$50	\$175, sellers
Hongkong Fire	\$50	\$300, buyers
China Fire	\$20	\$92, buyers
Steamship Coys.—		
H. Canton and M.	\$15	\$31, sellers
Indo-China S. N.	\$10	\$73½, sellers
China and Manila	\$50	\$19, sales
Douglas Steamship	\$50	\$31
Star Ferry	\$10	\$30, sellers
	\$5	\$19, sellers
Shell Transport and Trading Co.	£1	21/- ex div., buy.
Do. pref. shares	£10	£10, nominal
Refineries—		
China Sugar	\$100	\$106, sellers
Luzon Sugar	\$100	\$10, sellers
Mining—		
Punjom	\$11	\$1, sellers
Do. Preference	\$1	25 cents
Charbonnages	Fcs. 250	\$600, sellers
Raub	18/10	\$6, sellers
Docks, Etc.—		
H. & W. Dock	\$50	\$209, sellers
H. & K. Wharf & G.	\$50	\$95, sales & buyers
New Amoy Dock	\$6½	\$38, sellers
S. C. F. Boyd & Co.	Tls. 100	Tls. 125, buyers
Land and Building—		
Hongkong Land Inv.	\$100	\$150, ex div., sel.
Kowloon Land & B.	\$30	\$45½, sellers
West Point Building	\$50	\$55, ex div., sellers
Hongkong Hotel	\$50	\$147, sellers
Humphreys Estate	\$10	\$11½, sellers
	\$2½	\$2½
Shanghai Land Ins. Co., Ltd.	Tls. 52	Tls. 110, sales
Cotton Mills—		
Ewo	Tls. 50	Tls. 33, sellers
International	Tls. 75	Tls. 25
Laon Kung Mow	Tls. 100	Tls. 35
Soychee	Tls. 500	Tls. 170
Hongkong	\$10	\$15½, sellers
Green Island Cement	\$10	\$25, buyers
China-Borneo Co., Ltd.	\$12	\$8½
Watson & Co., A. S.	\$10	\$14½, sellers
Hongkong Electric	\$10	\$12½, sellers
	\$5	\$7, sellers
Hongkong & C. Gas	\$10	\$140, buyers
Hongkong Rope	\$50	\$145, buyers
Fenwick & Co., Geo.	\$25	\$50
Hongkong Ice	\$25	\$240, sellers
H. H. L. Tramways	\$100	\$300
Hk. Steam Water-Boat Co., Ltd.	\$10	\$15½, buyers
Dairy Farm	\$6	\$12½, buyers
Campbell, Moore & Co.	\$10	\$40
Bell's Asbestos E. A.	12/6	\$5, sellers
United Asbestos	\$4	\$9
Do.	\$10	\$210, buyers
Tebrau Planting Co.	\$5	nominal
China Prov. L. & M.	\$10	\$9, sellers
Watkins Ltd.	\$10	\$7½, buyers
China Light & Power Co., Ltd.	\$10	\$5
Powell, Ltd.	\$10	\$9.60, buyers
Shanghai and Hongkong Dyeing and Cleaning Co., Ltd.	\$50	\$50
Canton, Hongkong Ice & Sugar Companies—	\$10	\$10, nominal
Alhambra Limited	\$500	\$200
Philippine Tobacco Trust Co., Ltd.	\$50	\$10, buyers

VERNON & SMYTH, Brokers.

Messrs. J. P. Bisset & Co in their Share Report for the week ending 22nd January, 1904, state:—The main features of the week's business, has been a decline in Langkats and Shanghai and Hongkew Wharves, while other stocks remained generally on the same level. Our money market is still extremely tight, and with the near approach of the Chinese New Year we cannot look for any immediate improvement. The T. T. rate on London to-day is 2/7. Banks.—H. & S. Banks. No business reported. Our quotation from Hongkong is \$642½ nominal, and the latest London quotation is £63 10s. Marine & Fire Insurance.—North Chinas have been placed at Tls. 220 and a sale of China Fires to Hongkong is reported at \$92½. Shipping.—Indo-Chinas. A fair business has been done for cash and January at Tls. 50 to Tls. 51. The closing rate for forward transactions are Tls. 52½ for March and 53 for April. Docks and Wharves.—Farnhams have remained quite steady with buyers and sellers at Tls. 123 cash and January. March shares have been done at Tls. 125, and there is a transaction for April at Tls. 126. Shanghai & Hongkew Wharves have declined and business is reported on the 16th at Tls. 210 cash, with a sudden drop on the 20th to Tls. 200 and 205 for March. Yesterday a further drop was experienced, and at the close the price cash and January is Tls. 197½. Hongkong and Whampoa Docks—are quoted at \$209 nominal. Sugars.—No business reported. Mining.—Weihaiwei Golds have been placed at \$18 cash. Land.—Shanghais improved and on the 20th shares were placed at Tls. 109 and 110 for cash closing at Tls 109, at which shares can be obtained. Industrial.—No business reported in Cotton Stocks. Gas shares have been placed at Tls. 107. Shanghai Paper & Pulp at Tls. 120 for March. Maatschappij & Co. in Langkats. The market opened at Tls. 302½ for cash and at closing there are cash buyers at Tls. 292½. During the interval shares have been placed at all intermediate rates, and the market is quiet. No transaction is reported for February, but for March a large business has been done, closing with buyers at Tls. 305. Tls. 312½ has been done for April. Sumatras have been placed at Tls. 53. Stores & Hotels.—Hall & Holtz at \$32½ and 32. Miscellaneous.—Nothing reported. Loans.—Perak sugar 7 per cent debentures have been negotiated at Tls. 97.

THE DEPRECIATION OF STOCKS.

Messrs. J. P. Bisset & Co. in a special circular, call attention to the depreciation of stocks. They state:—Of the total amount of depreciation amounting to Tls. 13,969,552, we are glad to say that only a small proportion is borne by Shanghai. In the case of the Shell Transport and Trading Co., showing a loss of over 7½ millions, only an infinitesimal amount is borne by Shanghai, and the same refers to the loss of nearly two millions in the Chinese Engineering and Mining Co., Ltd. The principal depreciation in which this port is concerned is in S. C. Farnham, Boyd & Co., Ltd., and Shanghai & Hongkew Wharf Co., Ltd., amounting to 5½ millions. This is almost entirely borne here, and we have to bear a very heavy proportion of the depreciation in Indo-Chinas. Against this may be put almost in its entirety the appreciation in Maatschappij, & Co. in Langkats. Shanghai shares only to a very slight extent in the depreciation in Hongkong Bank shares, as it enjoys little of the appreciation in Marine Insurances, with the exception of North Chinas and Yangtses, the greater portion of which latter stocks it benefits from. In Land shares the only stock that interests Shanghai to any extent is its own Land Investment Co., and this depreciation is largely borne here. In summing up, we make the depreciation borne by Shanghai on stocks generally on our table as being somewhere in the neighbourhood of three millions of taels. Our readers must know it is impossible to give accurate figures. Notwithstanding the continued tightness of money which we have experienced within the last five or six months and more particularly during the last month, stocks have remained steady and fairly strong at or about our December quotations. Given peace and a little easiness in money, we look for much higher rates in most of our stocks.

HOMEWARD FREIGHTS.

Messrs. Wheelock & Co. in their Report of the 21st instant state:—There is nothing of interest to report in our homeward freight market during the past fortnight, and exports of any description are practically at a standstill; a state of affairs which is largely due to the instability of exchange. For London and the Continent:—The only boats advertised on the berth besides the mails are the s.s. Nestor, sailing for London and Antwerp on the 28th, and the s.s. Radnorshire for Havre, London, Hamburg and Antwerp on the 30th inst.

Per Conference Steamers. To London and Northern Continental ports:—Tea 52/6 per ton of 40 cubic feet. General cargo 52/6 per ton of 40 cubic feet. Seeds 47/6 per ton of 20 cwt. To Marseilles and Havre:—General 48/- net per ton of 40 cubic feet. Seeds 47/6 net per ton of 20 cwt. To New York (Overland):—Tea 1 1/4 G\$ cents per lb gross. To New York via Suez:—30/- per ton of 40 cubic feet. To Shanghai:—Tea, tael 1.80 per ton of 13 half-chests. To Shanghai:—General, tael 1.80 per ton weight or measurement.

EXCHANGE.

FRIDAY, 29th January.

ON LONDON.—

Telegraphic Transfer 1/9 1/2
Bank Bills, on demand 1/9 1/2
Bank Bills, at 30 days' sight 1/9 1/2
Bank Bills, at 4 months' sight 1/9 1/2
Credits, at 4 months' sight 1/10 1/2
Documentary Bills, 4 months' sight 1/10 1/2

ON PARIS.—

Bank Bills, on demand 227

ON GERMANY.—

Credits 4 months' sight 230 1/2
On demand 185

ON NEW YORK.—

Bank Bills, on demand 43 1/2
Credits, 60 days' sight 44 1/2

ON BOMBAY.—

Telegraphic Transfer 133 1/2
Bank, on demand 133 1/2

ON CALCUTTA.—

Telegraphic Transfer 133 1/2
Bank, on demand 134 1/2

ON SHANGHAI.—

Bank, at sight 71 1/2
Private, 30 days' sight 72

ON YOKOHAMA.—

On demand 89 1/2

ON MANILA.—

On demand nominal

ON SINGAPORE.—

On demand nominal

ON BATAVIA.—

On demand 108 1/2

ON HAIPHONG.—

On demand 1 1/2 p.c.p.m.

ON SAIGON.—

On demand 1 p.c.p.m.

ON BANGKOK.—

On demand 62

SOVEREIGNS, Bank's Buying Rate \$11.10

GOLD LEAF, 100 fine, per tael 58

BAR SILVER, per oz. 25 1/2

TONNAGE.

HONGKONG, 29th January.—Since last report, our freight market shows a decided improvement in all directions. From Saigon to Hongkong, there has been a sudden demand for tonnage, and rates at the close are 20 cents per picul for medium sized carriers. Saigon to Japan, 35 cents per picul has been paid for March loading. Saigon to Philippines, there is a good demand for small steamers, at 30 cents per picul. North coast Java to Hongkong, 35 cents per picul has been paid for wet sugar, and this rate is still obtainable. Coal freights have improved and are in demand. Moji to Hongkong, \$2.10, to Singapore, \$2.25, to Philippines, \$3.40. The following are the settlements:—

Algoa Bay—British barque, 1,111 tons, Hongkong to Callao, £2,000 in full.

Salamanca—British steamer, 883 tons, Karatsu to Manila, \$3.40 per ton.

Charles Tiberghien—French steamer, 2,750 tons, Moji or Kuchinotzu to Singapore, \$2.25 per ton.

Crusader—British steamer, 2,744 tons, Moji to Hongkong, \$2 per ton.

Benledi—British steamer, 1,481 tons, Moji to Hongkong, \$2 per ton.

Hinsang—British steamer, 1,040 tons, Moji or Kuchinotzu to Hongkong, \$2.10 per ton.

Hopsang—British steamer, 1,359 tons, Moji or Kuchinotzu to Hongkong, \$2.10 per ton.

Undine—Norwegian steamer, 1,017 tons, Moji to Swatow, \$2.25 per ton.

M. Struve—German steamer, 966 tons, Hongay to Hongkong, \$1 per ton.

Pronto—Norwegian steamer, 837 tons, Rangoon to Cebu, 50 cents per picul.

Loyal—German steamer, 1,184 tons, Rangoon to three ports Java; thence two ports to Hongkong, \$24,000 in full.

Quarta—German steamer, 1,146 tons, two ports north coast Java to Hongkong, 35 cents per picul.

Germania—German steamer, 1,714 tons, three ports north coast Java to Hongkong, 30 cents per picul.

Holstein—German steamer, 1,103 tons, Touron to Shanghai, \$3.25 per ton.

Germania—German steamer, 1,714 tons, Saigon to one or two ports Japan, 35 cents and 37 cents per picul (March).

China—German steamer, 1,093 tons, Saigon to Hongkong, 12 cents per picul.

Prometheus—Norwegian steamer, 1,023 tons, Saigon to Hongkong, 20 cents per picul (prompt).

Taihu—German steamer, 1,065 tons, monthly, hence to Mauritius and back, \$7,000 per month.

Pronto—Norwegian steamer, 837 tons, monthly, 8 months, at \$5,250 per month.

Pronto—German steamer, 719 tons, monthly, 12 months, at \$4,500 per month.

Sullberg—German steamer, 782 tons, monthly, 12 months, at \$5,000 per month.

Clara Jeben—German steamer, 1,103 tons, monthly, 6 months, at \$6,500 per month.

Babelberg—German steamer, 1,379 tons, monthly, 6 months, at \$6,000 per month.

Petrarch—German steamer, 1,252 tons, monthly 6 months, private terms.

SHIPPING

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES SINCE LAST MAIL.

ARRIVALS.

January—

24, Empire, British str., from Australia.

24, Hailan, French str., from Pakhoi.

24, Hailoong, British str., from Swatow.

24, Hangchow, British str., from Canton.

24, Kowloon, German str., from Chinkiang.

24, Lothian, British str., from San Francisco.

24, Maidzuru Maru, Jap. str., from Anping.

24, Pitsanulok, German str., from Bangkok.

24, Polynesian, French str., from Shanghai.

25, Kumano Maru, Jap. str., from Australia.

25, Lydia, German str., from Chinkiang.

25, Mazagon, British str., from Kobe.

25, M. Struve, German str., from Hongay.

25, Monterey, U.S. monitor, from a cruise.

25, Progress, German str., from Swatow.

25, Riverdale, British str., from New Zealand.

25, Wilmington, U.S. cruiser, from a cruise.

25, Yuensang, British str., from Manila.

25, Kalgan, British str., from Canton.

25, Zafiro, British str., from Manila.

26, Alcette, French gunboat, from Shanghai.

26, Amara, British str., from Moji.

26, Daigi Maru, Japanese str., from Tamsui.

26, Haitan, British str., from Swatow.

26, Kwongsang, British str., from Canton.

26, Petrarch, German str., from Moji.

26, Pronto, Norwegian str., from Hoihow.

26, Whampoa, British str., from Shanghai.

27, Borneo, German str., from Sandakan.

27, China, German str., from Saigon.

27, Haimun, British str., from Tamsui.

27, Hinsang, British str., from Java.

27, Hunan, British str., from Canton.

27, Kasan, Russian trspt., from Odessa.

27, Malaya, Russian str., from Port Arthur.

27, Mathilde, German str., from Canton.

27, Meefoo, Chinese str., from Shanghai.

27, Socotra, British str., from Antwerp.

27, Szechuen, British str., from Canton.

27, Telemachus, British str., from Saigon.

27, Yarra, French str., from Marseilles.

28, Chowfa, German str., from Bangkok.

28, Hailoong, British str., from Swatow.

28, Hangsang, British str., from Shanghai.

28, Hitachi Maru, Jap. str., from Antwerp.

28, Kumsang, British str., from Calcutta.

28, Luchs, German gunboat, from Canton.

28, Maristow, British str., from Moji.

28, Pak Lat, German str., from Bangkok.

28, Pingsuey, British str., from Liverpool.

28, Rosetta Maru, Japanese str., from Manila.

28, Solace, U.S. trspt., from San Francisco.

28, Sullberg, German str., from Dulny.

28, Taiping, Chinese str., from Chinkiang.

28, Tamba Maru, Jap. str., from Singapore.

28, Wakamatsu Maru, Jap. str., from Moji.

28, Woosung, British str., from Canton.

January— DEPARTURES.

24, Ajax, British str., for Shanghai.

24, Daijin Maru, Jap. str., for Swatow.

24, Deuterus, German str., for Canton.

24, Mathilde, German str., for Canton.

24, Michael Jeben, German str., for Hoihow.

24, Woosung, British str., for Canton.

25, Anping Maru, Jap. str., for Coast Ports.

25, Eclipse, British cruiser, for Misa Bay.

26, Edendale, Brit. str., for Phanrang, Annam.

26, Hailoong, British str., for Swatow.

26, Hhangchow, British str., for Shanghai.

26, Hong Bee, British str., for Amoy.

27, Iyo Maru, Japanese str., for Seattle.

26, Kwangtah, Chinese str., for Shanghai.

26, Lydia, German str., for Canton.

26, Mazagon, British str., for Bombay.

26, Polynesian, French str., for Europe.

26, Progress, Norwegian str., for Quinhon.

26, Rohilla Maru, Japanese str., for Moji.

26, Ting-ang, British str., for Wuhu.

26, Tsinan, British str., for Kobe.

27, Athenian, British str., for Vancouver.

27, C. Ferd. Laeisz, Ger. str., for Yokohama.

27, Clara Jeben, German str., for Anping.

27, Daiya Maru, Japanese str., for Moji.

27, Germania, German str., for Sourabaya.

27, Kumano Maru, Japanese str., for Japan.

27, Lightning, British str., for Calcutta.

27, Maidzuru Maru, Jap. str., for Swatow.

27, Marie Valerie, Austrian str., for Trieste.

27, Oscar II., Norwegian str., for Kutchinotzu.

27, Rein, Norwegian str., for Bangkok.

27, Yarra, French str., for Shanghai.

27, Yuensang, British str., for Manila.

28, Dorothea Rickmers, Ger. str., for Swatow.

28, Hailan, French str., for Pakhoi.

28, Haitan, British str., for Swatow.

28, Kalgan, British str., for Shanghai.

28, Mathilde, German str., for Quinhon.

28, Meefoo, Chinese str., for Canton.

28, Socotra, British str., for Shanghai.

28, Szechuen, British str., for Shanghai.

PASSENGER LIST.

ARRIVED.

Per *Gera*, from Genoa, for Hongkong, Mrs. Fundel, Miss Louise Colhoun, Messrs. J. Fundel and Spungli; from Singapore, Mr. and Mrs. A. Young, Mr. and Mrs. Ayam, Messrs. Ernst Fiegel and Ferguson; from Naples Mr. F. Wandres; from Southampton, Mr. F. Allen.

Per *Empire*, from Australia for Hongkong, Mr. and Mrs. Menzies, Mr. and Mrs. Blakely, Mr. and Miss Archibald, Mrs. Lilley, Misses Campbell, Bond, Fleming and Graham, Messrs. L. Walsh, F. L. Pratt, F. D. Phillip, R. T. Maurice, Professor Watson, H. Tudor, M. Clarke, J. W. Coffey, J. V. Gilles, S. R. Price, Archibald, Matthews and Eager.

Per *Polynesian*, for Hongkong, from Shanghai, Mrs. Newel and two children, Mr. and Mrs. Souza, Mrs. and Miss Goletz, Mr. and Mrs. Nosomya, Miss Logart, Messrs. Sonnevile, Kuseron, Hemprieck, Foy, Duclos, and Tonosawa; for Saigon, from Kobe, Mr. Ferrand; from Shanghai, Messrs. Ponlet James, Guillermet, and Malansse; for Singapore, from Yokohama, Sister G. Michel; from Kobe, Messrs. Hiyashi, Saito, Hayashi, Kajama, and Nomura; for Marseilles, from Yokohama, Prince and Princess Itebijo, Miss Itebijo; from Kobe, Mr. and Mrs. Okoski and infant, Messrs. Stuart Beazley, Walder, Horne, Decent, Toyada, Matsunami, and Stahmel; from Shanghai, Mrs. Duolos, Messrs. de Ponthiere, Gregoire, Longe, Brigoulet, Saint Pol, Jannais, Lemiere, Garrier, Petrement, Hano, Leblanc, Berthoux, Thomas, Ducret, and Cressever.

Per *Yarra*, for Hongkong, from Marseilles, Mrs. Luzu and infant and Mr. Dupre and child; from Singapore, Mrs. Caroline, Major Carter, Messrs. C. J. Arnell, Coclarum, and Palamull; from Saigon, Mr. and Mrs. L. Brignauty, Mr. and Mrs. Houssaye, Messrs. Asgaard, Ed. Foruni, and E. F. Mercier; for Shanghai, from Marseilles, Mrs. Metifot and infant, Messrs. Clavel, Metifot, Portes, Arthur Rozier, and K. Maria; for Kobe, from Colombo, Mr. F. A. Kader, from Singapore, Mr. E. Mailjee; for Yokohama, from Marseilles, Messrs. Thorne, Jolly, and Knight; from Colombo, Capt. Carroll, Messrs. Muller and A. J. Neneomen.

DEPARTED.

Per *Gera*, for Shanghai, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Hill, Miss H. Vernon, Messrs. A. Campignon, S. Campignon, F. Fiegel, E. Felgite, Wm. E. Brady, Ch. Meurer, H. Hackstrob, F. Reiber, Chas. W. Ure, C. Gilchrist, and Ginerig; for Nagasaki, Mr. P. Wallace; for Kobe, Mr. Chugen Kherag; for Yokohama, Messrs. H. Reiss and J. Jacquemin.

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